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FOR DETAILS

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ISSUE
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DRAKE'S DOOM?

First gameplay details on Uncharted 4,
the biggest game of 2015

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PS4 BLOCKBUSTERS

YOU **MUST** PLAY THIS YEAR

METAL GEAR ONLINE

Sneak a peek at The Phantom Pain's
incredible multiplayer mode

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How the LittleBigPlanet team
made Tearaway better than ever

THE BEST-LOOKING GAME EVER MADE?

Meet The Order: 1886, a next-gen
experience only possible on PS4

PS4 EXCLUSIVE STREET FIGHTER V

ALSO THE TOMORROW CHILDREN WWE 2K15
HOTLINE MIAMI 2 DYING LIGHT JUST CAUSE 3
KINGDOM HEARTS 2.5 THE CREW DESTINY
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PS4 PS3 Vita PSN WelcomePLAY

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7 THE YEAR
AHEAD

Every important
PS4 game, month by
glorious month

UNCHARTED 4: FIRST
GAMEPLAY DETAILS 24

THE REBIRTH OF LOCAL
MULTIPLAYER 40

THE MAKING OF
RESIDENT EVIL 74

YEAR OF THE SNAKE



IT'S HAPPENING, PEOPLE. This is the year that we finally get our hands on many of the incredible games we've been looking forward to for what feels like forever.

The Phantom Pain is a front-runner for me, if only because I can't wait to see how Kojima manages to fuse all the seemingly disjointed themes, moments and storylines we've seen so far without falling back on retcons and nanomachines. *Bloodborne* joins Big Boss in the First Class carriage of my own personal hype train for reasons that shouldn't even need explaining, kept company by the likes of *Uncharted 4* (especially after seeing it in action) and new arrival *The Order: 1886*, which I was surprised to enjoy as much as I did when I got my hands on it last month.

It's not all about my personal VIPs, though. The year is already packed with games that look insanely good and that's before we even see the next wave at E3 and Gamescom. A lot of the big names might have slipped from 2014, sure, but we'd rather that than suffer another year of unfinished releases, constant patches and genuinely broken games. Last year was just the warm-up – 2015 is the real deal and it's going to get crazy. We could even see games like *FFXV* and *Kingdom Hearts 3* sneak into this year, the mere idea of which tickles my very soul.

The thing is, I know what I'm like. The first meaty release on my most wanted list that comes along will be the one I cling to for the rest of the year, at the expense of the rest (see also: *Destiny*). So *Bloodborne*, it looks like you'll get the dubious honour of being the reason I don't play some of the biggest games around until six months after everyone else. I hope you're happy with yourself, you beautiful bastard.

Enjoy the issue, and I'll see ya online.

LUKE ALBIGÉS
DEPUTY EDITOR
@LukemonMGJ
PSN: PorthMinster

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Destiny (PS4)

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07

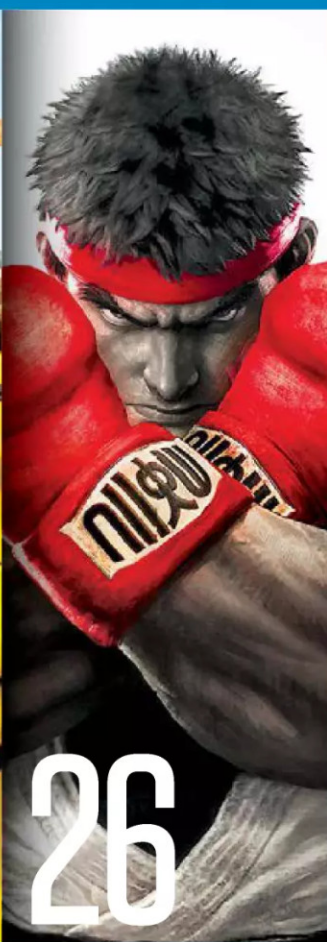
2015 PLANNER

Looking ahead to a
blockbuster year for PS4

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Tonight we're gonna party like it's 1886

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JUST CAUSE 3

Move over, GTA...

STREET FIGHTER V

The fighter returns exclusively to PS4

BACK TO THE COUCH

Local multiplayer's renaissance

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Wait! Don't open that door!

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2015

A MONTH-BY-MONTH BREAKDOWN
TO WHAT COULD BE PLAYSTATION'S
BIGGEST EVER YEAR



JANUARY

When the Saints go marching in



△○×□ *Citizens Of Earth* offers playful politics on Vita.



△○×□ Hopefully, *Dying Light* will be more technically robust than *Dead Island*.

CITIZENS OF EARTH

PUB Atlus

DEV Eden Industries

FORMAT PS4/Vita

WHAT IS IT: An RPG that lets you recruit whoever you like.

This game riffs on classic 2D RPGs, citing *Earthbound* and *Pokemon* as reference points. You play the vice president of the world, described by developers Eden Industries as the classic stereotypical bureaucrat – in other words, he's completely useless. As such, you'll need to recruit folks from his hometown to give him a hand; interestingly, there aren't any non-recruitable NPCs (apart from enemies), so you should have plenty of allies to choose from.

DYING LIGHT

PUB Warner Bros.

DEV Techland

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A first-person, parkour-flavoured, zombie survival game.

The easiest way to describe this game is as follows: *Mirror's Edge* with zombies. Your athleticism will be your main tool as you try and avoid the hordes of zombies by leaping around the game's urban environments, though melee combat will also be a feature. During the day, zombies will be more docile, making this the best time to scavenge for supplies, set traps and save survivors. Perhaps the best way to experience the game will be via its four-player online cooperative mode.



SAINTS ROW IV: RE-ELECTED

PUB Deep Silver

DEV Volition

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A spruced-up version of the original.

Alongside the release of *Gat Out of Hell*, Volition is also going to be putting out a PS4 version of 2013's *Saint's Row IV*. For those of you who missed this one, *Saints Row IV* is different to its predecessors in that it introduces superpowers

that allow you to run up walls, leap huge distances and freeze enemies in battle, as well as messing with new experimental weapons such as the Dubstep Gun amongst other things. There'll be a bundle available that includes *Gat Out of Hell*.

GRIM FANDANGO

PUB Double Fine

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4/Vita

WHAT IS IT: A remake of the classic adventure game from 1998.

Releasing at a time when it was heralded that the adventure game was dead, LucasArts' *Grim Fandango* didn't do well commercially back in 1998, though it was critically acclaimed. Being that it's impossible to play unless you want to grab yourself a second hand copy and wrestle with the technical issues you'll face getting it working on a modern PC, it's great to hear that a new version of this cult classic is coming to PS4 and Vita.

SAINTS ROW IV: GAT OUT OF HELL

PUB Deep Silver

DEV Volition

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A follow-up to *Saint's Row IV* that'll send you to hell.

This standalone expansion for *Saints Row IV* sees players take on the roles of series stalwarts Johnny Gat and Kinzie Kensington, the setup being that they are on a quest to save the leader of the Saints from Hell after they've been captured by Satan. If you've played *Saints Row* before, you know exactly what to expect – plenty of silliness, ostentatious weapons and, following on from *Saints Row IV*, superhuman abilities that you'll use to traverse the city of New Hades.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

JANUARY 7

Don't Starve

JANUARY 24

Dragon Ball Z: Battle Of Z

JANUARY 15

Assassin's Creed Liberation HD

JANUARY 31

Tomb Raider: Definitive Edition

FEBRUARY

When Order is restored to PS4



THE ORDER: 1886

PUB Sony
DEV Ready At Dawn
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A third-person cover shooter with knights and werewolves.

One of 2015's biggest PS4 exclusives is *The Order 1886*, a third-person cover shooter that takes place in a Victorian-inspired setting in which the industrial

revolution collides with mysticism. The game is a real showpiece for the PS4, with its cinematic aesthetics set to drop plenty of jaws. Oh, and it plays pretty well, too.



EVOLVE

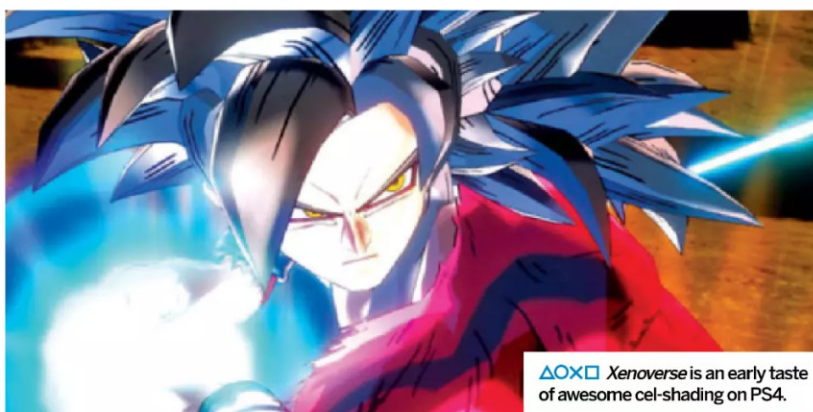
PUB 2K Games
DEV Turtle Rock Studios
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A shooter where four players fight a player-controlled monster.

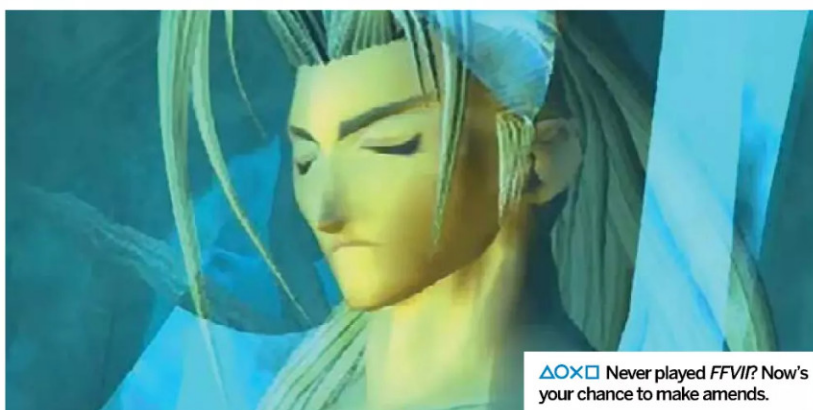
If Turtle Rock can match the standard they set with the *Left 4 Dead* series with their new team based multiplayer shooter, then we could have a very special game on our hands. We had some concerns after playing the alpha, but we think you need some time to get familiar playing the game's classes and the monster in order to see the best of it has to offer.



△OX□ *Dead Or Alive 5's* port kicks off a great month for fighting fans.



△OX□ *Xenoverse* is an early taste of awesome cel-shading on PS4.



△OX□ Never played *FFVII*? Now's your chance to make amends.

DEAD OR ALIVE 5: LAST ROUND

PUB Tecmo Koei
DEV Team Ninja
FORMAT PS4/PS3

WHAT IS IT: An updated version of the inappropriate fighter.

Following from *Plus* and *Ultimate*, we're getting yet another version of *DOA 5* in February. We don't need that many revisions, but as it's the only one available on PS4, we'll let it slide.

DRAGON BALL XENOVERSE

PUB Bandai Namco
DEV Dimps
FORMAT PS4/PS3

WHAT IS IT: *Dragon Ball*, so, a game where you fly about and punch people.

Xenoverse's story mode will feature a new character that is player-created to go along with its new story that is outside of the *DBZ* canon. The bulk of it will still be about flying about and punching people, though.

FINAL FANTASY VII

PUB Square Enix
DEV In-house
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Only one of the greatest RPGs ever made, that's all...

In what we in the business call 'a bit of a dick move', Square built up to a big *FFVII* announcement at PlayStation Experience, only to unveil a port of the PC version. We still want it.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

FEBRUARY 28
Thief

MARCH

When our Souls will be forever lost

FINAL FANTASY TYPE-0 HD

PUB Square Enix

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A remake of a PSP game that only came out in Japan.

It's not the only re-release of a game that's previously appeared elsewhere to be released in 2015, but it is the one that most people will probably have a good reason play. We say that because the original PSP version of *Type-0* only came out in Japan. The game sees you step into the shoes of a group of school kids (albeit kids in a combat school) who must defend their city from invasion. This is a *Final Fantasy* game, so they will, of course, end up on a quest to save the world.

GAMES DEVELOPER CONFERENCE 2015

GDC is not traditionally a big event for game announcements, being that it is heavily industry-focused. However, that doesn't mean you shouldn't expect some interesting information and insight to emerge from the event.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

MARCH 7

South Park:
The Stick Of Truth

MARCH 14

Dark Souls 2

MARCH 21

Metal Gear Solid V:
Ground Zeroes



BLOODBORNE

PUB Sony

DEV From Software

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A huge PS4 exclusive from the team behind *Dark Souls*.

The *Souls* games' legacy is pretty much there for everyone to see, particularly in *Bloodborne*'s uncompromising difficulty, its demand that you sharpen your skills to the required level or suffer the consequences. It has its own identity as well, though. That's evident

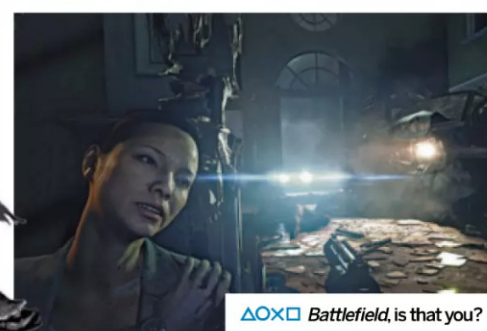
in *Bloodborne*'s world, its twisted architecture that's populated with monstrosities that reflect a nightmare vision of Victoriana. It is also there in the way that the game forces you to take a more direct approach to combat as the game urges you to go all-out against enemies.



△OX□ *Type-0* is looking superb.



△OX□ Story is key in *Hardline*.



△OX□ *Battlefield*, is that you?

BATTLEFIELD HARDLINE

PUB EA

DEV Visceral Games

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: The first police-themed entry in the *Battlefield* series.

After being delayed from 2014 in order to give developer Visceral more time to act on the feedback they received from *Hardline*'s beta, the cops vs criminals FPS will finally be making its way to PS4. The game's single-player mode is doing things a little differently, giving its campaign an episodic structure that's meant to mirror TV cop dramas. This is a *Battlefield* game, though, so multiplayer will of course be the focus.

△OX□ *Project Cars* could just be the best showcase for PS4 yet.



PROJECT CARS

PUB Bandai Namco

DEV Slightly Mad Studios

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A racing game that's chasing a ridiculous level of realism.

Marvel at the cars! Maybe enjoy some racing, too, but make sure you marvel at the cars. *Project Cars* (the aforementioned *Cars* stands for Community Assisted Racing Simulator, obviously) looks ridiculously realistic, with an unfathomable level of attention of detail paid to its vehicles, tracks and weather systems. The game is also set to support Sony's Project Morpheus VR headset, so look out for that later in the year. Or whenever Morpheus arrives...

APRIL

When there will be guaranteed Fatalities

MIGHTY NO 9

PUB Comcept

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4/PS3/Vita

WHAT IS IT: *Mega Man.*

Comcept's definitely-not-Mega-Man-but-obviously-Mega-Man Kickstarter success is due to release in April. The game is a 2D action platformer in which you must run, jump and shoot your way to victory. There are eight bosses to take down in the game, with the defeat of each earning a new ability for your character. Familiar?



SOMA

PUB Frictional Games

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A horror game from the minds behind Amnesia.*

Again, there is no official release date for *Soma* as of yet, but it's been intimated that it's likely to hit in either Q1 or Q2 of 2015. For that reason we are going to estimate an April release for the first-person survival horror title. This gives us plenty of time to prepare ourselves mentally as developer Frictional's *Amnesia: The Dark Descent* has a reputation as one of the most terrifying horror games released in recent years. This is a studio that knows what it's doing when it comes to scaring the crap out of us, and it has been doing it to us for years. More, we say!



BROFORCE

PUB Devolver Digital

DEV Free Lives Games

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A 2D action shooter starring 80s action parodies.*

No release date for *Broforce* has been set of yet, but we're going to suggest that April is a realistic target for the game. The game has felt finished from a mechanical perspective for months. With co-op already sorted, all that's needed from our perspective is some more levels for the campaign.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

APRIL 1

Mercenary Kings

APRIL 11

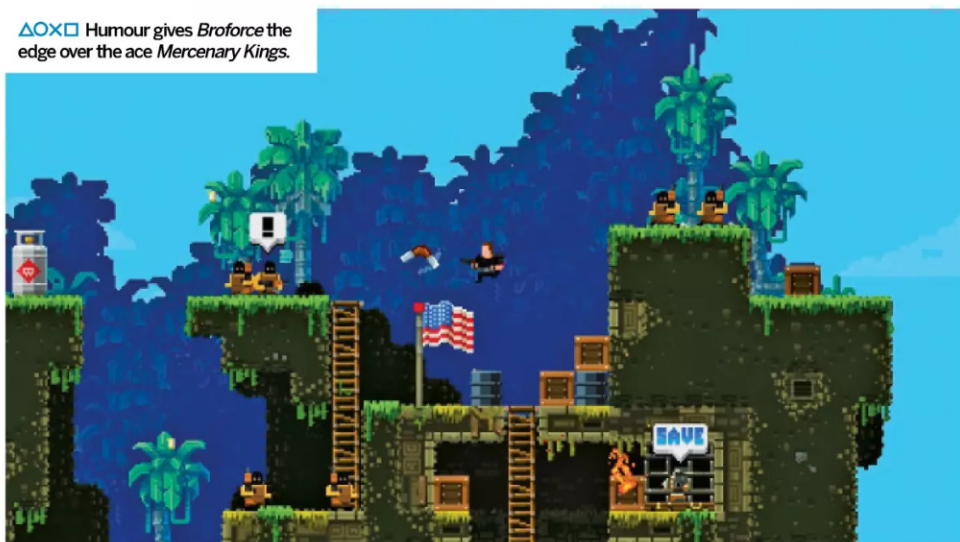
Lego: The Hobbit

APRIL 14

Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn



AOX Humour gives *Broforce* the edge over the ace *Mercenary Kings*.



MORTAL KOMBAT X

PUB Warner Bros.

DEV NetherRealm

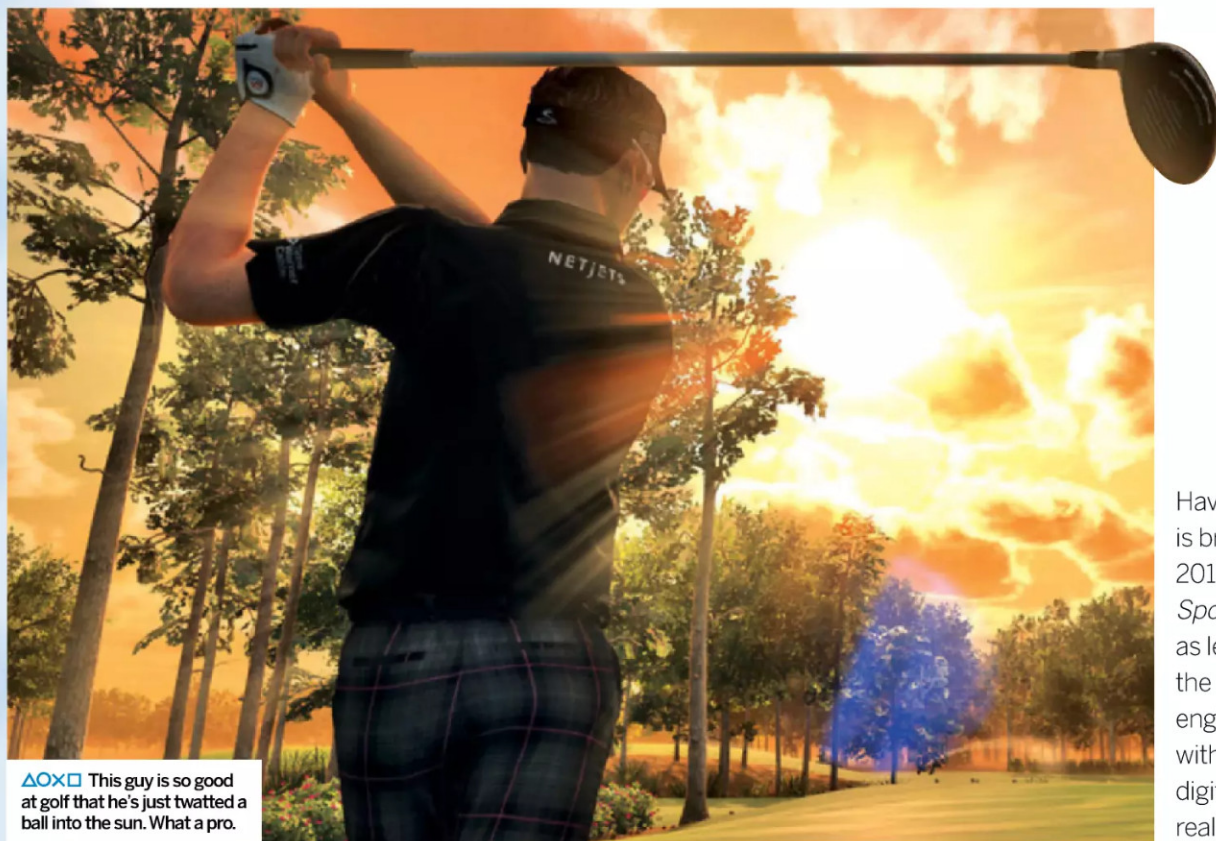
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A fighting game that allows you to rip out your foe's spine.*

Fighting game fans aren't very well catered for on PS4, so the release of *Mortal Kombat X* in April should be awesome. The game is coming together pretty well, the studio behind it clearly having learned a lot with the surprisingly enjoyable

Injustice. Naturally, *Mortal Kombat*'s characteristic brutality features strongly, so expect to see bones, limbs and organs being broken, severed or removed when *Mortal Kombat* rolls around in a few months, and it's all gorier than ever on PS4.

When we come to know the thrill of the Hunt



AOX This guy is so good at golf that he's just twatted a ball into the sun. What a pro.

EA SPORTS PGA TOUR

PUB EA Sports
DEV EA Tiburon
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *Hitting small balls with sticks.*

Having skipped 2014, EA is bringing golf back in 2015 in the form of *EA Sports PGA Tour*. As well as leveraging the power of the PS4 and the Frostbite engine to present us with visually impressive digital realisations of real life courses, EA is

having a bit of fun with the series by adding in some ridiculous fantasy levels, as we saw in the E3 2014 trailer that showed off a *Battlefield* themed course. Interestingly, this is the first EA Sports golf game which doesn't include 'Tiger Woods' in its name.

DEAD ISLAND 2

PUB Deep Silver
DEV Yager Development
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *The follow-up to ridiculous zombie hack-em-up, Dead Island.*

Instead, of being developed by Techland, *Dead Island 2* is being developed by Yager, who you might remember from *Spec Ops: The Line*. As a talented team with some innovative ideas, it'll be interesting to see what Yager can do with *Dead Island*, though it's a game with a different tone to their previous work. Scheduled for a vague Spring release, we reckon it'll slip a little and hit just ahead of Summer.

LIFE IS STRANGE

PUB Square Enix
DEV Dontnod
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *An episodic mystery adventure where you can rewind time.*

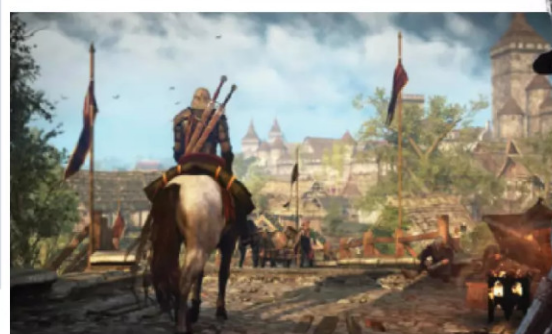
There's been no word on when *Life Is Strange* will release, other than that it'll be sometime in 2015. We're going to go out on a limb and guess that it'll hit this month. This adventure game will tell the story of two former best friends investigating the disappearance of a girl in their hometown. *Life Is Strange* employs a short term rewind mechanic that allows you to play with the various options available to you.

THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT

PUB Bandai Namco
DEV CD Projekt Red
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A fantasy RPG in an open world full of dangerous monsters.*

We're not going to lie; *The Witcher 3*'s huge open world and branching storyline makes it a game that we're keen to play. Add to that the monster hunting, the different approaches you can take to completing quests and the RPG-like combat and we think CD Projekt Red might just have a winning formula on its hands.



AOX The Witcher's delay was welcomed in the wake of so many botched releases.



THISTIME LAST YEAR

MAY 9

Bound By Flame

MAY 20

Transistor

MAY 20

Wolfenstein: The New Order

MAY 27

Watch Dogs



BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT

PUB Warner Bros
DEV Rocksteady
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: The final entry in Rocksteady's critically acclaimed Batman trilogy.

Given how good *Arkham Asylum* and *City* were, we're very much looking forward to Batman's debut on PS4. As a current-gen-only game, *Arkham Knight* is looking pretty stunning. The biggest change to the

series is the introduction of the Batmobile, which seems likely to change things up significantly, though *Arkham*'s brilliant combat system and trademark brand of aggressive stealth should still be present.



NO MAN'S SKY

PUB Hello Games
DEV In-house
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A huge, procedurally generated exploration game that puts a whole universe at your feet.

We reckon this one might be ready sooner than people expect and, as such, we think Sony is going to announce a June release for *No Man's Sky* at E3. The unfathomably large universe of *No Man's Sky* is one that we're eager to get exploring, as we're sure is the case for many of you. Telling E3 viewers that *No Man's Sky* is coming, say, the week after E3, would be a great way of generating excitement at Sony's E3 conference itself.

E3

As is the case every year, E3 is the place that the vast majority of big announcements will get made. That means definitive release dates for the rest of 2015's games, new gameplay of the likes of *Uncharted 4* (please) and jaw-dropping reveals of some of the games (amongst other things) that are coming in 2016.

LET IT DIE

PUB GungHo Online Entertainment
DEV Grasshopper Manufacture
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A free-to-play hack and slash with asynchronous multiplayer.

Grasshopper is responsible for some of the craziest games to ever hit retail. The gimps of *Killer7*; the high-kicking zombicide of *Lollipop Chainsaw* and the potty-mouthed and criminally underrated *Shadows Of The Damned*, to name but a few. *Let It Die* looks to have something of a darker tone than its forerunners, but that playful nature is still clear even from the logo alone. It's a gritty F2P combat game where death sends your defeated character to another player's world as an AI-controlled enemy. Certainly intriguing...

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

JUNE 10
EA Sports UFC

JUNE 24
Transformers:
Rise Of The Dark Spark

JULY

When summer sun dries up gaming, dood



△○×□ We could happily just look at *Rime* all day long. It's stunning.

RIME

PUB Sony
DEV Tequila Works
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A beautiful adventure exploration game that's been compared to *Ico*.

This is one of our most anticipated games of 2015. Whether it'll be ready for July, we can't say for sure, but the beautiful footage we've seen of *Rime* suggests that it is well into development. Evoking comparisons to the likes of *Ico* and *Journey* not to mention

drawing inspiration from Studio Ghibli classics such as *Princess Mononoke* and *Spirited Away* as well as the work of surrealist painter Salvador Dalí, this mysterious exploration-orientated puzzle-platformer is one that we can't wait to get our hands on some time soon.

RATCHET & CLANK

PUB Sony
DEV Insomniac
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A re-imagining of the first game for PS4.

Given its strong relationship with PlayStation, is good to see another *Ratchet & Clank* game is coming in 2015, this time for PS4. Sony announced at last year's E3 that a remake of the original *Ratchet & Clank* was in development for PS4 and we're expecting it to be ready in time to release around July.



△○×□ *Disgaea* is home to some of the biggest numbers in all of gaming.



△○×□ The new *Ratchet* game will most likely tie in with the upcoming movie.

DISGAEA 5

PUB Nippon Ichi
DEV In-house
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A tactical RPG with demons in it.

The latest entry in the long-running *Disgaea* series is set to release in Japan in March, but without a confirmed European release, we're expecting to be a little later here, hence why we've dropped it into July. The objective of the SRPG is to unite all the Netherworld's Overlords to fight against the demon emperor, Void Dark.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

JUNE 30
OlliOlli

JULY 23
Oddworld:
New 'n' Tasty

JULY 30
The Last Of Us
Remastered

AUGUST

When Germany is the place to be

WILD

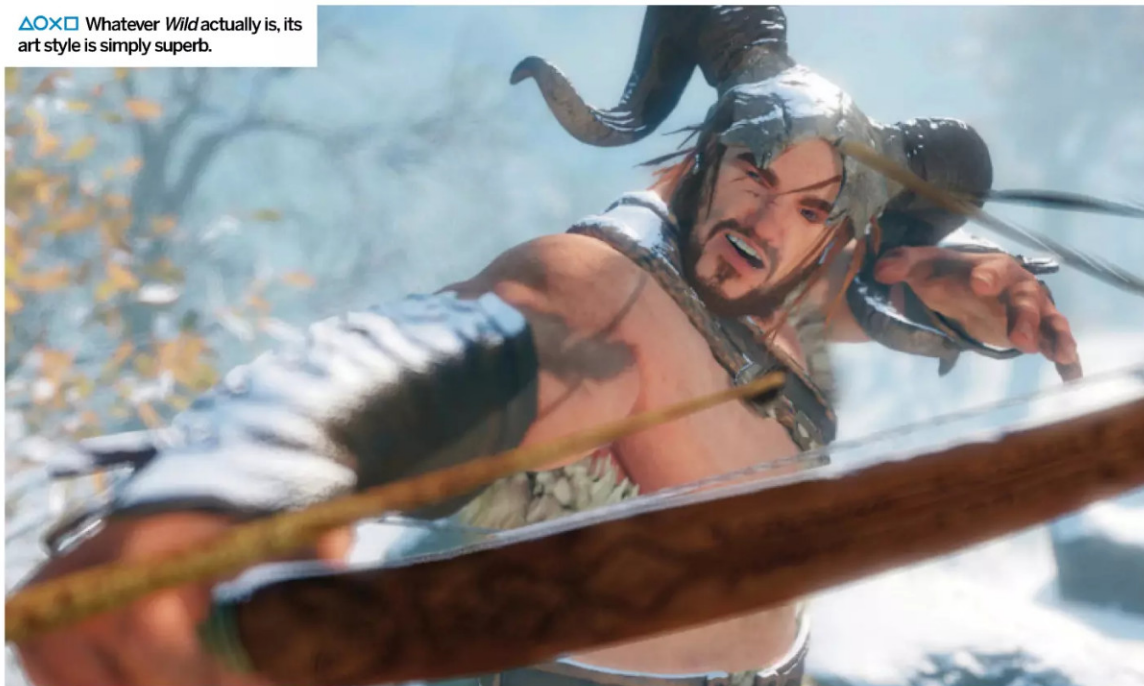
PUB Sony
DEV Wild Sheep Studios
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *Er... a survival game? Maybe?*

August might be a little bit optimistic for *Wild*, but what the hell – we want to play it, so we're going to wish for the best. All we know about *Wild* is that it takes place in a huge open world the size of Europe

and that you can play as any creature you please, human or animal. What you actually do when you're playing it, we're not so sure, but we reckon it will be some kind of survival game.

△OX□ Whatever *Wild* actually is, its art style is simply superb.



NOT A HERO

PUB Devolver Digital
DEV Roll7
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A fast-paced 2D cover shooter.*

The team behind *OlliOlli 2* is going to have a second game coming out in 2015. *Not A Hero* sees you ducking behind and sliding between cover as you gun your foes down. The game has a number of characters, each of which is geared towards a different playstyle.



△OX□ Q-Games' take on Godzilla.

THE TOMORROW CHILDREN

PUB Sony
DEV Q-Games
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *A soviet inspired Minecraft-like resource collection game.*

This one is fresh in the mind given that we've recently been playing the alpha. Our instincts tell us that it's still going to be a little while until *The Tomorrow Children* is ready for release, so we're slotting it into August. The game's got a little of *Minecraft* in it, some tower defence and collaborative multiplayer elements, though we're still not entirely sure what it is. We should have a far better idea come August.

GAMESCOM

While E3 is unquestionably the big dog when it comes to game announcements, trailers and gameplay reveals, Gamescom has had some great stuff on show over the last couple of years. For that reason, we'll be excited to see what Sony has up its sleeve when it visits Germany in 2015.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

AUGUST 6
The Swapper

AUGUST 13
Hohokum

AUGUST 29
Plants Vs Zombies:
Garden Warfare



△OX□ Stop that. Do some work.

SEPTEMBER

When silly season kicks off again

RAINBOW SIX SIEGE

PUB Ubisoft

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A glorious return for the classic tactical shooter series.

With so many online shooters following closely in the footsteps of *Call Of Duty*, it's actually quite refreshing to see the return of a console gaming staple. A proper tactical team-based shooter with a pre-match planning phase that harks back to the early days of the franchise, *Siege*'s one-life matches look to be as horribly tense as ever and the quick-fire nature of each team clash makes this a perfect fit for the YouTube generation.



ΔOX□ For long-standing *Rainbow* fans, *Siege* looks like a return to form.



ΔOX□ *Homefront* has got 'potential dark horse' written all over it...

HOMEFRONT: THE REVOLUTION

PUB Deep Silver

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: An FPS sequel nobody asked for, but that actually looks pretty good.

Despite the interesting concept of the original shooter, it was about as average as games come. And while the sequel looks pretty good, seeing the franchise change hands several times (from THQ to Crytek to Deep Silver) doesn't exactly instill confidence that *The Revolution* will be a cohesive and polished shooter that can do its subject matter justice. Still, we would love to be proven wrong.

EVERYBODY'S GONE TO THE RAPTURE

PUB Sony

DEV The Chinese Room

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Story-led exploration of a rural apocalypse.

Indie studio The Chinese Room's first game should give you a fair idea of what to expect from this PS4 exclusive – *Half-Life 2* mod *Dear Esther* is a touching art game based purely around exploration and narrative, and we fully expect *Rapture* to offer a similarly offbeat take on the end of the world.

FIFA 16

PUB EA

DEV EA Sports

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: A football game about football, starring footballers.

We'd put money on EA releasing a new footy game in 2015, but there's no point – the odds would be so astronomically low that we'd probably stand to lose money. Still, it's going to happen, and stiff competition from *PES* will make this an important year for EA – one slip-up while *PES* continues to ascend towards its golden form of yesteryear and the masses could start to change allegiance.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

SEPTEMBER 9
Destiny

SEPTEMBER 26
FIFA 15



DESTINY 1.5

PUB Activision

DEV Bungie

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: The first major expansion for the divisive shooter.

According to the leaked contract between Activision and Bungie, the long-term plan for *Destiny* is to release a main series game every two years with large expansions coming in the off years. That would place the first of these in 2015, and we wouldn't be

at all surprised to see it launch around the one-year anniversary of the game. The business plan may have changed since the contract emerged a few years back, but regardless, Bungie will continue to add content to *Destiny* for a good while.

ΔOX□ *Rapture* looks incredible, but it won't be to everyone's tastes.



ΔOX□ This guy will probably be the main character in *FIFA* this year too.



OCTOBER

When Nathan Drake dies (maybe)



UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END

PUB Sony
DEV Naughty Dog
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Oh, just the most exciting game on PS4...

This is the big one, people. There's nothing like a good exclusive to showcase the true power of a platform (*God Of War III* and *The Last Of Us* were both leagues ahead of anything on Xbox 360 visually) and considering Naughty Dog is perhaps

the best developer in the world right now, anyone still waiting to join the new generation will need to seriously rethink their position when Drake returns for what could possibly (based on the teasing title and trailer) be his last adventure.



ΔOX□ Oh, *Metal Gear*. Never change.

ΔOX□ Big Boss is such a badass.

TOM CLANCY'S THE DIVISION

PUB Ubisoft
DEV Ubisoft Massive
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Third-person, realistic *Destiny* set in a ruined New York.

Combining many things that we like – Clancy near-future gunplay and tech, MMO-inspired multiplayer mechanics and a loot system, to name but a few – *The Division* is something we can't wait to get our hands on. Ubisoft isn't exactly on the best run lately, but *Far Cry 4* showed there's still talent there. And with *Rainbow Six*'s comeback looking glorious, perhaps the Clancy name can stand strong while *Assassin's Creed* stumbles.



ΔOX□ We'd love to see *Silent Hill* become a big franchise once again.



ΔOX□ When Ubisoft will actually finish *The Division* is anyone's guess.

MGS V: THE PHANTOM PAIN

PUB Konami
DEV Kojima Productions
FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Open-world stealth silliness with some explaining to do.

Slotting a game into the gap between *Peace Walker* and the original MSX *Metal Gear* was always going to present inconsistencies, but it's amazing what you can explain away with nanomachines these days. While admittedly brief, *Ground Zeroes* is superb and it sets the scene for *The Phantom Pain* perfectly both in terms of story and gameplay. Afghanistan is a big place, Troy, and it won't be the only setting either. It's going to be huge, it's going to be stupid and it's going to be amazing.

TOKYO GAMES SHOW

Japan's largest gaming event hasn't offered much in the way of exciting announcements in the last few years but now, with the PS4 finally starting to make a dent in the Japanese market, we could really start to see some big news out of TGS again. If they haven't miraculously made it out by then, expect to see new stuff on *Final Fantasy XV* and *Kingdom Hearts 3*, plus maybe even new stuff from Sony Japan Studio and From Software, if we're lucky. Oh, and the latest on *The Last Guardian*, assuming it even still exists.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR

OCTOBER 3
Shadow Of Mordor

OCTOBER 7
Alien Isolation

OCTOBER 14
The Evil Within

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

When bellies fill and wallets empty

ASSASSIN'S CREED: VICTORY

PUB Ubisoft

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Another bout of 'hold X to history' is a given, but will it work?

Even with such large teams on *Unity* and *Rogue*, it feels as though Ubisoft might have bitten off a little more than it could chew by dividing its collective talent on two *Assassin's Creed* games at the same time. We fully expect to see a more focused effort this year, made for PS4 and possibly ported to PS3 as well, assuming the market is still buoyant enough by then to warrant doing so. Set in Victorian London, this year's game has a lot to prove for both franchise and developer. Here's hoping they pull it off.

JUST CAUSE 3

PUB Square Enix

DEV Avalanche Studios

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Hijacks and hijinks in a stunning open world playground.

When it comes to daft open world fun, *Just Cause* is up there with *Saints Row*. It's the way everything flows that makes this series fun – drive a car off a cliff, leap out the window and parachute down to the streets below, grappling onto a moving motorcycle and reeling yourself in to claim it as your own... insane stunts like that. All of a sudden, the studio's *Mad Max* game doesn't look so appealing...



HUMAN ELEMENT

PUB Robotoki

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: The *Last Of Us*-esque post-apocalypse exploration of human nature.

Robotoki founder Robert Bowling used to be the voice of the *Call Of Duty* franchise, but his new venture couldn't be much further removed from all that shooty-bang action. A zombie apocalypse game where the focus is on the

remaining humans rather than the undead (a bit like *The Walking Dead* or *The Last Of Us*, if you will), this stands to be an interesting project, though it'll need to avoid a lot of heavy hitters in order to garner any kind of real attention.



ΔOX□ Cross Star Wars with Battlefield and you've won 2015.

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT

PUB EA

DEV DICE

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Battlefield-style team shooter set in a galaxy far, far away.

With the new movie set for a December release, EA would be crazy to pick any other time to release this exciting collaboration. The old PS2 games were really good and we can't think of a more capable team to pick up the pieces and bring the series back. *Star Wars* is still a pretty big deal but with the help of a brand new (and most likely awful) movie, this could be huge.

PLAYSTATION EXPERIENCE

Sony's stand-alone event in December could stand to be a running thing, as it's perfectly timed to build hype for PS4 just ahead of the holiday rush. We're expecting some big things out of E3 2015, and most of 2016's first wave of titles will be here. Assuming that Sony decides to repeat the event – we could see Guerrilla's new game, something new from Media Molecule or even a new *God Of War*. YES PLEASE.

CALL OF DUTY

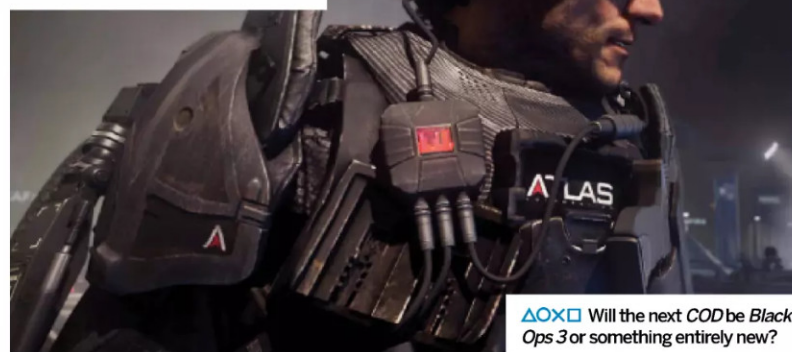
PUB Activision

DEV Treyarch

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: Please stop asking ridiculous questions. Thanks.

Advanced Warfare is the best-received *COD* in some time, so the timing couldn't be better for Treyarch – whose *Black Ops* games already offered a near-future twist on warfare – to take the reins of gaming's biggest series once again. Expect the usual early November release window to be adhered to, and for the team to try to build on the bold strides made by the superb *Advanced Warfare*.



ΔOX□ Will the next *COD* be *Black Ops 3* or something entirely new?

ΔOX□ Scenes like these are what make *Just Cause* awesome.



THIS TIME LAST YEAR

NOVEMBER 14

Assassin's Creed: Unity

NOVEMBER 18

Far Cry 4

DECEMBER 2

The Crew

FINAL FANTASY XV

PUB Square Enix

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *An RPG that might make it out sooner, but we doubt it.*

Although those who buy *Type-0 HD* in March will get access to a demo of *XV*, anyone who has seen the gameplay footage will know just how huge this game is going to be. We'd be amazed if we saw this any time before 2016. Which is a shame.

DOOM

PUB Bethesda

DEV id Software

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *When there's no room left in development hell...*

We've no idea what's going on with this one. *Wolfenstein* pre-orderers get to jump on the beta if and when that happens but since the game was first announced in 2008, holding your breath is a worse idea than taking on a demon with a pistol.

HITMAN 6

PUB Square Enix

DEV IO Interactive

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *More murder from everyone's favourite bald killer.*

With *Absolution* dividing both critics and fans, IO Interactive has already stated how it hopes to rejuvenate the franchise. With all other projects cancelled to make Agent 47 the team's priority, hopes are high for murder most splendid.



ΔOX□ Nothing hits the spot quite like a nice mug of Hi-Potion...



ΔOX□ The team is promising big things for the next *Hitman* game.

DESTINY 2

PUB Activision

DEV Bungie

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *Just so you know, there're more Fallen AND Hive on the way...*

Activision's ten-year deal with Bungie lays out a plan for four *Destiny* games, making this a shoo-in for 2016. The structure is there – all the team needs to do is pack the game with content next time and even the haters will jump back on their Sparrows.

BATTLEFIELD 5

PUB EA

DEV DICE

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *The next 'proper' Battlefield won't arrive until 2016.*

DICE has its hands full right now with other titles meaning *Hardline* will have 2015 to itself. The team knows the eyes of the industry are fixed on it after 4's online disaster, so a 2016 date will maybe give DICE time to make this one actually work.



KINGDOM HEARTS 3

PUB Square Enix

DEV In-house

FORMAT PS4

WHAT IS IT: *Action-RPG craziness in various Disney worlds.*

Hearing that this was actually in development was basically a dream come true for us (we freaking love *KH2*) but given that it doesn't seem to be as far along as *FFXV*, it seems wildly

unlikely that it'll see light of day before 2016. With Disney now owning both *Star Wars* and *Marvel*, Sora's new adventure has the potential to be the broadest and most exciting yet.



ΔOX□ BREAKING NEWS: *Battlefield 5* will be about war.



ΔOX□ Will Activision's business model hurt sales of a *Destiny* sequel?

ETA Q3 2015

DEV AVALANCHE STUDIOS

PUB SQUARE ENIX

TWITTER @JUSTCAUSE

Just Cause 3

You'll believe a man can fly



IS THERE AN open world series that offers as much freedom as *Just Cause*? We're talking about a game that lets you grapple hook onto a jetplane, attach some C4 to it, hijack and fly the plane towards an enemy base and then parachute out to see the plane crash into your target in a ball of flames. Indeed, it is that sense of play that Avalanche Studios is focusing on as it unveils *Just Cause 3*, set to release in 2015.

The pitch for the game is that the studio wants to keep that core of ostentatious, explosive, freeform gameplay, whilst improving on the details. For example, that grapple hook and parachute combination that lets you zip swiftly throughout the world will of course be a key facet of *Just Cause 3* (though you'll now also have a wing suit to play with), but Avalanche says that it has done a lot of work tightening up the game's controls, making navigation more enjoyable. The same goes for the

further encourage us to sail through the skies, but in the sense that there will now be caves and tunnels to explore underground.

The most interesting thing about *Just Cause 3*, though, is the level of destructibility that the developer has talked about. The studio has said that the game will allow you to pull down statues, blast your way through walls and topple radar dishes. It also gives the example of thwarting pursuers by destroying a bridge as they follow behind you. In combination with the tools that *Just Cause* traditionally gives its players to mess around in its world – creating chaos by attaching a car to a plane, for example – you can well imagine the kind of explosive, spectacular and ridiculous scenarios it might be possible to create.

That has always been the strength of the *Just Cause* series – the fact that it provides an excellent toolset for players to create their own fun. Where it has tended to struggle is when it scales things

“IMAGINE THE KIND OF EXPLOSIVE AND RIDICULOUS SCENARIOS IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO CREATE”

experience of driving the dozens of vehicles that will be littered throughout that game's world, from cars and planes, to boats and helicopters. With ex-members of the *Burnout* team taking a look at that aspect of the game, Avalanche says driving mechanics will be much improved.

When it comes to the environment that you'll be traversing, the game will be set on the fictional Mediterranean island of Medici. In terms of scale, Avalanche says we shouldn't expect something that's a lot bigger than the last game (that's not unreasonable given that *Just Cause 2* was pretty huge), but, continuing on that theme on refining the details, the developer says that it wants to focus on the density of the world, rather than the size. Having said that, the shift in environmental design won't just be about adding flourishes that make the island a more aesthetically pleasing and believable place. *Just Cause 3*'s environment is set to have a greater sense of verticality, not only in that it will

back and asks the player to perform very specific actions in campaign missions – a result of loose controls and shoddy AI, amongst other things. If Avalanche is successful in doing what it says and tightening up the series core mechanics, *Just Cause 3* will be far better balanced and will hopefully address that issue whereby it starts to feel a little ropery at a smaller scale.

It's still too early to make any judgements about *Just Cause 3*, but we like the noise coming from Avalanche. If the studio can ensure that *Just Cause* remains chaotic and over the top, throw in a few new toys to play with and refine its core mechanics, then we could well have an incredibly enjoyable game to look forward to later in the year.

Paul Walker-Emig

Grapple your way up Avalanche Studios' offices and peek through the window if you'd like to learn more about **JUST CAUSE 3**. Or check the website: www.justcause.com



SHARE THIS

JUST COS

Show us your inner Michael Bay

Avalanche has said that it sees *Just Cause 3* as being an ideal game for the Share functionality that's available on the PS4 and that the team can't wait to see the videos that players create. Rise to that challenge. You can attach vehicles to each other, grapple onto jetplanes, destroy buildings and bridges – use all that to create the most spectacular action scene imaginable.



www.imagineshop.co.uk



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

△×□ While the fact that *Just Cause 3* isn't coming to PS3 will be disappointing for some, it should ensure that the game is nice and pretty.



The island of Medici in which *Just Cause 3* is set will be around 400 square miles.



Taking over HQs will turn them into a base of operations, similar to outposts in *Far Cry 4*.



You can attach a sports car to a jet plane as it takes off. What more do you want?

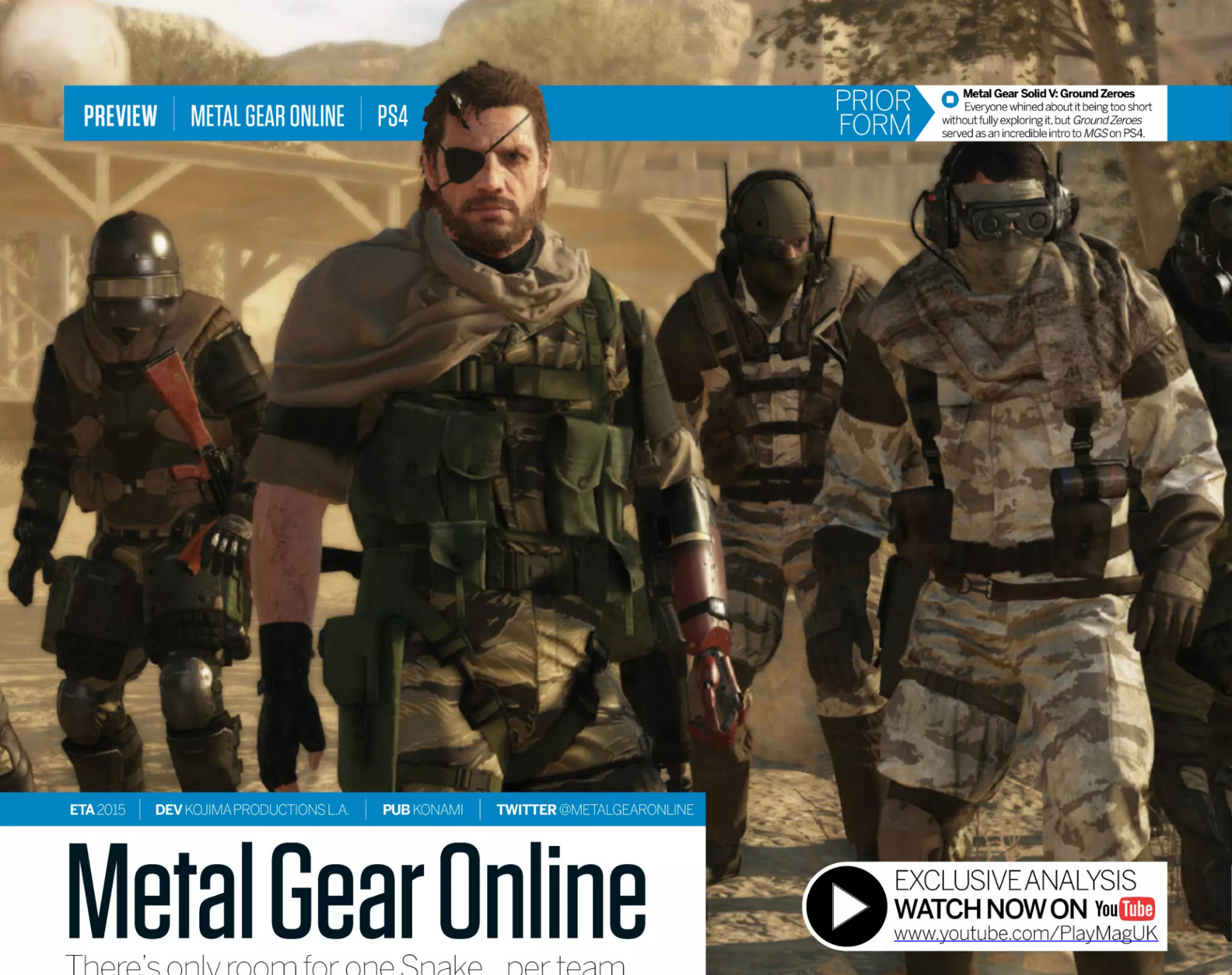


Using the grapple and parachute makes it possible to travel around like Spider-Man.



△×□ Now THIS is precisely what *Just Cause* is all about.





ETA 2015 | DEV KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS L.A. | PUB KONAMI | TWITTER @METALGEARONLINE

Metal Gear Online

There's only room for one Snake... per team



EXCLUSIVE ANALYSIS

WATCH NOW ON YouTube

www.youtube.com/PlayMagUK



WE STILL DON'T actually have a release date, despite what the internet is telling you. We'd love it if the Swedish T-shirt/Moby Dick

Studios conspiracy was true, mind, but we're firmly in the Kojima apologists' camp, and perhaps what we see as genius is in fact a cocktail of arrogance and narcissism. Perhaps it's both. Still, you can't deny his sense of humour, with the recent reveal of *Metal Gear Online* bringing with it a fluffy toy dog that distracts enemy sentries and *that* selfie.

All well and good, but what's it all about? And is *Metal Gear Online* really going to take off this time around, after its decidedly stealthy presence back in the *Metal Gear Solid 4* days? We are adamant that no one really invested too much time into it back in 2008, and with so many other excellent multiplayer-driven games out there, does something so comprehensively single-player really need an online component?

So many questions – we're playing right into Kojima's hands. What we do know, however, is that

Metal Gear Online will appear for free alongside *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain*, whenever that may be. We know that it will feature a class system, as online shooters typically do, and it looks like you'll be able to play as characters from the main game as well as the faceless Mother Base operatives with names like Simon and Albatross that were a staple of *Peace Walker* way back when. Whoever discovers the 'play as Hideo' Easter Egg first wins a prize from us – we'd be wholly unsurprised if there was one.

There isn't much information in terms of different game modes currently, although the match footage we have seen hinted at something of an assault mode, with one team having to infiltrate the others' base and recover some item of importance. The footage shown was clearly very scripted, reminding us of the gameplay videos that appeared of *Rainbow Six: Siege* wherein everything plays out with such skill and fluidity that it seems like a movie. We have *never* played an online game with such precision, and we doubt many of you

have either. Still, the maps look large, the tools are there and with the right set of players, you could be enjoying a truly tactical, stealthy multiplayer experience when the game rolls out.

There appear to be some lovely little touches, too. As Snake climbs aboard a walking mech and unloads its minigun at a group of enemies, we see one poor bugger trying to run away while concealed inside a cardboard box. He doesn't get far. And in fact, the idea that potentially every single player on your server could spend the entire match hidden in a box could turn every round into a high-tension cat and mouse experience. Or the most boring thing ever.

As time wears on, it'll be nice to see more maps revealed and more general details, but for now *Metal Gear Online* seems to have a real Deathmatch feel to it, and how well this philosophy will translate to the best triple-A stealth franchise available is unclear. The gameplay demo showed us a wide array of legitimately stealthy moments, complete with silent takedowns over railings and



SHARE THIS



DUCK FACE

Humiliate foes with selfies

Kojima's latest descent into madness seems too good to be true, but what if it isn't? What if you could whip out a camera and snap a selfie in the middle of battle? Kojima can't resist putting stupid things like this in *MGS*, so we're holding onto our misguided optimism for now. Alternatively, just mash the Share button as soon as you see a Hind-D, which you will – they're all the rage in *Metal Gear*, after all.

"WHOEVER DISCOVERS THE 'PLAYAS HIDEO' EASTER EGG FIRST WINS A PRIZE FROM US. WE'D BE WHOLLY UNSURPRISED IF THERE WAS ONE..."

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- ▲ The return of a great online suite that many people ignored in the days of *MGS4*.
- A clear focus on team-based espionage to augment a single-player focused franchise.
- × Class-based loadouts bring it in line with other popular online games.
- Wholly bizarre and completely unexplained methods by which to distract enemy sentries.

some sort of weird cloaking device that left behind a particle trail as if Delsin Rowe had been there. Marking enemies as targets will play a key role as well, allowing players to pull back and perform recon instead while still directly aiding their team.

If Kojima Productions can deliver on its promise of a fresh, stealthy take on versus multiplayer then *Metal Gear Online* will no doubt be a worthy addition to *The Phantom Pain*. If it strays too far into aggro third-person shooter territory then it won't reflect its source material and won't stand out in a packed world of online PvP. We've seen unnecessary multiplayer suites tacked onto some great games in the past and they've sullied the experience, but with the right focus, *Metal Gear Online* could be a hell of a lot of fun when it launches at some point in the next 50 years.

Steve Holmes

METAL GEAR ONLINE has its feet up at Mother Base with Kojima Productions. For more info visit www.konami.com/mgs/metal-gear-solid-v-the-phantom-pain



△×□ Metal Gear?! No, actually, but it kinda looks like one. Whether or not these mechs will be some sort of scorestreak is unclear.

ETA OCTOBER 2015

DEV NAUGHTY DOG

PUB SONY

TWITTER @NAUGHTY_DOG

Uncharted 4: A Thief's End

"I'll see you in another life, brother"



WHEN THE STUDIO behind the *Uncharted* series and *The Last Of Us* rocks up to show off gameplay of its next huge PS4 exclusive, there is certainly going to be a lot of pressure on it to deliver. Did Naughty Dog manage to do that with the fifteen minutes of *Uncharted 4* footage that appeared at PlayStation Experience? Yes. Absolutely.

The first thing that's evident as the game slips seamlessly from cutscene into gameplay is that this should be a real showcase for the power of the PS4. We're treated to some stunning views of the coast, with jagged rocks piercing a sea painted with hues of dark blue and turquoise, a cloudy dawn sky overhead. Off in the distance is an eye-catching mountain to which Drake is heading throughout the course of the demo. As he moves ever closer to his destination, the sun rises and we find ourselves overlooking a dense, lush rainforest, mist rising in the distance as the landscape rises to meet the mountain that cuts through the forest canopy. What we're getting at is that this is an insanely detailed and good-looking game. Sceptics might argue that we've seen gameplay demos in the past that exceed what we actually get from the final release. That's a fair point and one that's worth bearing in mind, but, given Naughty Dog's track record, we're pretty confident that *Uncharted 4* will look nothing short of outstanding on release.

It's not only the attention to detail that's evident in the construction of the environment in the *Uncharted 4* demo (that environment is likely Île Saint-Marie, as you'll know if you read our detective work in issue 246) that grabs the attention from a technical perspective, but also a bounty of contextual animations that add to the spectacle. After all, *Uncharted* has always been about giving you the sense that you're in a blockbuster movie and small animation flourishes not only aid the sense of realism, but, during combat and climbing, just add a little salt and pepper to the steak.

By far the coolest example of one of those new animations is when Drake is under fire while atop a rocky outcrop and finds himself needing to make a rapid exit as a grenade is lobbed beside him. Drake leaps off of the platform, uses his grappling hook to

latch on to a branch and swings round in a wide arc towards the enemy below him, leaping into a flying punch that knocks his foe out cold. In one of those aforementioned touches that adds to the action movie feel of *Uncharted*, Drake catches the enemy's machine gun in mid-air and proceeds to start firing off shots without blinking an eye. Nice.

This footage isn't just about showing how pretty *Uncharted 4* is, then – it's about giving us a little look at some of the game's new mechanics. Hopefully, that hook will add a new dimension to the game's climbing, along with the introduction of the pick that we see Drake using to jam into soft rock and create a handhold for himself. While we've enjoyed climbing in *Uncharted* in the past, it's fair to say that they are simplistic, so anything to add anything new to that aspect of the game is welcome.

Perhaps more intriguing than specific mechanics though, is the way that the area in which Drake is battling in this demo is designed. It seems to be more open than combat arenas we've seen in past *Uncharted* games, structured in a such a way that you are encouraged to constantly stay on the move, using the environment as a means to flank and surprise your enemies as you clamber around them. It seems like a cool way of blending *Uncharted*'s various aspects together – ensuring that it's no longer a case of 'this is a climbing bit' and 'this is a shooting bit'. Being as we've only got a small section of the game on which to make any judgements, this may not be an accurate representation of the game, but we'd like to see this more open and fluid approach applied to the game at large.

Naughty Dog's footage gives us hope that the PS4's first *Uncharted* will be precisely what we want – one that retains its focus on spectacle and adventure, while also introducing a few tweaks that makes gameplay a little less passive. It also leaves us with a little mystery: just who is the man that refers to Drake as "little brother"? A real relative? A comrade? A rival? Or something else altogether?

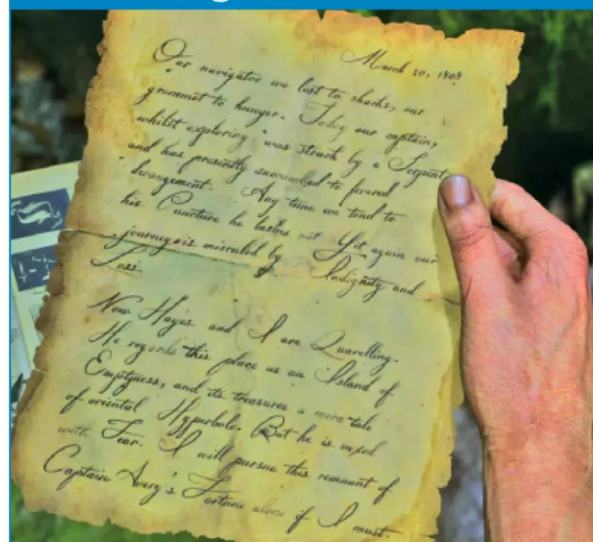
Paul Walker-Emig

We've found a map that confirms that **UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END** is located at Naughty Dog. Check the website for more details: unchartedthegame.com



PIRATE HUNTING

Uncovering *Uncharted*'s secrets



We won't go over all the detective work in issue 246 again, save to say that *Uncharted 4* looks to be about hunting down the treasure of the pirate Olivier Levasseur who pulled off the most successful hauls in pirating history. The letter that Drake picks up in the *Uncharted 4* trailer, however, contains hints that lead us to pirates Thomas Tew, Henry Avery and his ship, *The Amity*. Avery is also famous for pulling off a huge haul. How all these pirates and their treasure link up isn't yet clear.



△○×□ This shouldn't be the first thing on our minds in this situation, but that water looks incredible.



EXCLUSIVE ANALYSIS
WATCH NOW ON YouTube
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WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



The man that refers to Drake as "little brother" is being played by Troy Baker.



It will tell a story that focuses on how Drake's journey affects both him and his friends.



The game introduces new tools, including a grappling hook and a climbing pick.



The title hints that it could be the conclusion to the *Uncharted* story.



△○×□ It'll be interesting to see what tweaks have been made to the series' combat and gunplay.

"NAUGHTY DOG'S FOOTAGE
GIVES US HOPE THAT THE PS4'S
FIRST UNCHARTED WILL BE
PRECISELY WHAT WE WANT"

ETA Q4 2015 | DEV CAPCOM | PUB CAPCOM | TWITTER @YOSHI_ONOCHIN

Street Fighter V

Sony flips Microsoft the spinning bird



SO AFTER YEARS of speculation and new versions of *Street Fighter IV*, it's actually happening – *Street Fighter V* is finally a real thing. But

that's not even the big news. The main talking point here is that the game will only be coming to PS4 and PC (no last-gen, Xbox One or Wii U versions), and it's worth discussing why that's such a big deal. For one, it's the transparency of the deal. Capcom made it clear that this isn't a timed exclusive or ambiguously worded coup – *SFV* is a PS4 console exclusive.

We've no doubt *Super/ Ultra/ Hyper SFV* will come to other platforms down the line, but the core

game will launch first for us to enjoy on PS4 alone. It's also worth considering what this means on a competitive level. While fighting games might not have quite the mass-market appeal they did when *Street Fighter II* exploded onto the scene, *Street Fighter* is still the tournament beat-'em-up of choice and when *SFV* inevitably takes over from *SFIV* as the main game at competitions, PS4 is going to become the lead platform both at the events themselves and as players practice and train beforehand.

The community is already throwing demands and wishlists at Capcom with regards to what the game should be, do and contain – some are calling for a

return to the purity of *SFII*, others for the risk-taking of *SFIII* while a few would be happy enough just to have an updated version of *SFIV*, and just about every character from the series has already been mentioned by fans who are desperate to see them return. There are no surprises on that front so far, the early build only showing off stalwarts Ryu and Chun-Li, so it'll be interesting to see what Capcom decides to do with the roster.

The slightly more realistic style would suggest that we probably won't see some of the stranger fighters like Twelve and Garuda returning (although that said, Blanka is basically a shoo-in as producer

“THE COMMUNITY IS ALREADY THROWING DEMANDS AND WISHLISTS AT CAPCOM”



△×□ Ryu appears to have both his regular super (Shinku) and chargeable super (Denjin) Hadokens. Can we use both now?



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



EXCLUSIVE ANALYSIS
WATCH NOW ON YouTube
www.youtube.com/PlayMagUK



PlayStation 4 is the only console you'll be able to play *Street Fighter V* on.



There will be a PC version as well, complete with cross play between the two systems.



No more Ultras should put the emphasis on pure skill instead of lucky comebacks.



Capcom finally has another chance to bring Q back. Do it. DO IT.

△×□ The art style is a little more realistic than in *SFIV*, yet a lot of the visual flourishes still reflect the old inky treatment.



Yoshinori Ono never leaves home without his little green friend) but there are still a host of legacy characters absent from *SFIV*'s comprehensive lineup that we'd love to see again. Karin, Eagle, Maki and Urien would all be great fits for what looks to be a combo-friendly new engine, while the likes of Q and R. Mika are welcome to return any time they like. No really, bring them back. It's likely we'll see quite a few new faces too, although Capcom's form with new characters is a little hit-and-miss lately – Juri is awesome, sure, but trash-tier oily wrestler Hakan (we still love ya, man) and yet *another* shoto in Oni aren't quite so reassuring.

In terms of mechanical changes, not a lot has really been shown off or clarified so far. It seems *SFIV*'s Focus mechanic is gone, as well as potentially Ultras as well – we'd welcome the removal of the comeback mechanic, but there'll certainly be something new to replace it. We may have already seen it, in fact. Both Ryu and Chun are seen entering powered-up stances before throwing out EX versions of moves, suggesting some kind of new system at play. It could be a charge akin to *Street Fighter X Tekken*'s held specials (which eventually become free EX moves and even supers), or

perhaps a one-use buff state like *MvC3*'s X-Factor. We are sure to learn more in the coming months, and we can't wait to have a fiddle around with the new systems soon to discover some ridiculous combos – with evidence of greater juggling and even OTG attacks for hitting fallen foes, it looks like there will be plenty of potential for show-stopping strings once you get a feel for each of the characters.

While we're crossing our fingers for a 2015 release, it's pretty obvious that *Street Fighter V* is still a fair way off. In the meantime, Capcom has been good enough to confirm a PS4 version of *Ultra Street Fighter IV* to keep us busy – it'll be arriving in the next few months with all of the costume DLC so far, which should make it pretty tempting for fight fans. Well, assuming the team takes a leaf out of the *Skullgirls* developers' book and adds PS3 arcade stick support at least, because we would rather not shell out for yet another pair of expensive arcade sticks. Do the right thing, Capcom.

Luke Albigés

STREET FIGHTER V is in training with Yoshinori Ono and his team at Capcom. Check the website for more details:
www.streetfighter.com



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Everything in the beautiful world is cleverly crafted and folded out of paper.



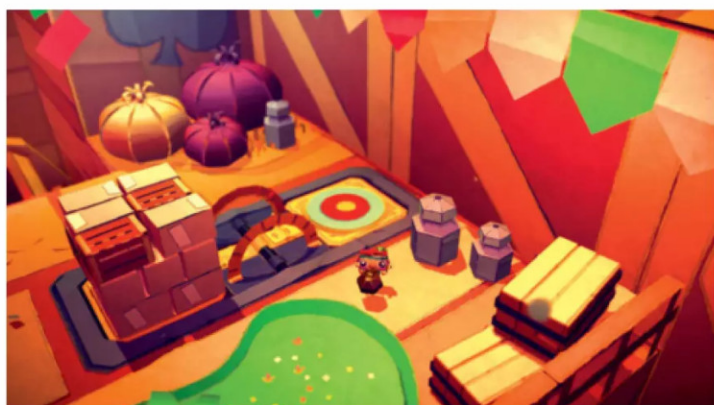
It manages to use controller and console gimmicks without ever feeling too gimmicky.



Media Molecule just can't make a bad game. That's a fact, people.



It's bigger, prettier and even more creative than the already excellent Vita version.



△○×□ Sick of all modern games being varying shades of brown? *Tearaway* is the perfect antidote.

Tearaway Unfolded

Media Molecule continues to push the envelope



AS MUCH AS we love the Vita, it's no great surprise that the relatively low install base means that even the best games on the handheld don't get the love they deserve. It makes sense, then, that a game as delightful as *Tearaway* should be afforded a second chance, but it's impressive to see Media Molecule doing so much to the experience to make it feel at home on PS4. The original game was designed to make use of every last feature of the Vita hardware and as a result, felt like a perfect showcase for the system. And by incorporating a bunch of new gameplay gimmicks and features that do exactly the same for the PS4's controller and camera combo, *Unfolded* feels every bit as at home on its new platform than on the Vita.

It looked lovely on Vita but here, all upgraded to 1080p and a seemingly flawless 60fps, you can really bathe in the simply beautiful design and art direction. The world and its inhabitants are all built out of paper, leading to an angular stylised look unlike anything else out there. As in *LittleBigPlanet*, this also adds coherency to the game world, with

no element in sight that doesn't adhere to the rules set out in the opening minutes.

Basic gameplay goes largely unchanged – it's a fairly simple and pretty tight 3D platformer at heart – but it's in the new PS4-centric mechanics that most joy is to be found. Many objects and characters can be picked up and by tilting back the controller, Iota/Atoi (based on whether you chose to play as a male or female envelope) will turn to face you. From here, he/she can throw the object out of the screen and into the controller, where it can be rattled around or tossed back into the world to help clear areas and solve puzzles. It's a technological magic trick that younger players will get more of a kick out of than seasoned veterans but as a gameplay device, the novelty doesn't wear off as it continues to be used in new and inventive ways to solve puzzles and navigate the world.

The DualShock 4's light bar is also called into action – holding the trigger buttons causes the glow from the controller to be projected into the world, brightening up dark areas and even hypnotising feeble enemies, allowing you to lead

them on a merry dance to their collective doom. The PlayStation Camera reprises its Vita role but it seems to be optional here, so while it'll still project your face into the sun above the game world, it might not be used for mapping snaps taken onto in-game objects or other such silliness.

If you didn't play *Tearaway* on Vita (which, looking at the sales figures, is a statistical likelihood), this is your chance to experience the same lovely game only with a host of cool new features and content. And even if you did, the new PS4-friendly mechanics and levels will probably be enough to drag you back in anyway. It's a little on the twee side at times, sure. But Media Molecule gets the balance right for the most part, the result being a delightful antidote to all the bullets, explosions and dudebro-following nonsense that make up so much of modern gaming.

Luke Albigés

TEARAWAY UNFOLDED is being lovingly crafted by those crazy hipsters at Media Molecule. Check the website for more details: tearaway.mediamolecule.com





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The Tomorrow Children

What's yours is Minecraft



COME, COMRADES! FOR the greater good of the nation, we must work together to... um, pick apples, deliver rocks and fight off budget Godzilla toys? While the core socialist concept of *The Tomorrow Children* is certainly a breath of fresh air in a market packed with games that champion selfishness and celebrate capitalism, the actual gameplay could be considered a bit too close to real work to make it all that much fun to play. When asked by a colleague during the recent alpha what the game was like, we floundered for a few moments before accidentally stumbling upon the most accurate description of *The Tomorrow Children* we've come up with even a few months down the line – 'it's a bit like having a second job'.

Whether due to the limited content of the alpha or a broader problem with the game itself, there just doesn't seem to be all that much to do right now. Effectively, what there is falls into three main categories – resource gathering, fighting off enemies and town development. As raw materials start to dry up and odd creatures slow their attack,

you just find yourself at something of a loose end. You'll run on treadmills to generate power, pick fruit to either turn in to the communal pool (or munch on to keep your stamina up) or round up loose materials no doubt dropped by those with smaller pockets than your own to make room for something shinier... it's just a bit of a grind. Enemy waves keep on coming, though, so there comes a time when all your combat-trained citizens are offline and you need to hold back the forces of evil, but mounted guns make this just as easy for an apple-picking civilian as a soldier.

Resource gathering itself is intentionally slow in order to promote teamwork and while you *can* just chip away at a rock face alone for a bit, you'll earn greater rewards for working with other players to bleed the land of materials that little bit faster. Doing so also helps grow your personal standing and while the in-game chat system may be simple, it's also important. You need to earn the validation of others to increase your income and improve your social standing, making an exchange of recognition or congratulation between co-workers

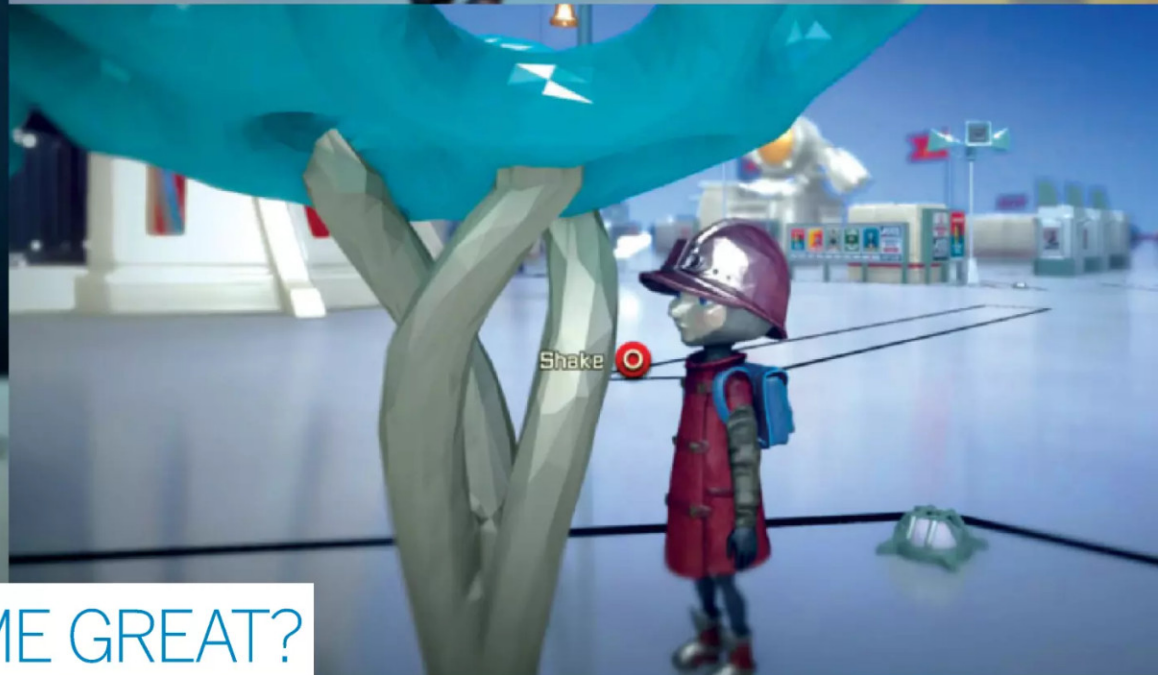
almost as important as the bits and bobs you end up pocketing from the hard labour itself. Once handed over to the state, these resources can be used to craft new stuff for your town, but it's not a simple process and there's always an orderly queue for the work benches.

This is largely due to the fact that the crafting system takes the form of a sliding tile puzzle, and not even an easy one like most examples of the outdated and basic task you see today. It'll stump you after a few wrong moves, wasting not only time that others could be using to create new items or facilities but also valuable materials that the community needs. The socialist voice of the game clearly comes through loud and clear, because we found ourselves feeling obliged to go out into the wilds to replace the resources we squandered in this way. But it does little to change the fact that neither the crafting process itself nor the act of refilling the community coffers was anything like what we would refer to as 'fun'.

Even though it might not be particularly enjoyable, the act of giving something back and



△○×□ Your pack, while upgradable, can only hold so much. Make sure you've got some friends to help lug stuff back.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

△ The art style is amazing and all of the socialist propaganda is absolutely on-point.

□ Prove your worth to the community and you could end up with even more power.

× It's the antithesis of most modern games, encouraging sharing and community spirit.

○ Working the land and serving the people can be surprisingly fulfilling.

working with your equals for the greater good can still be quite rewarding, both figuratively and literally. A message of praise from a stranger as you break rocks for the people back home is actually quite touching, while your physical contributions are used to calculate your income and importance when reporting back to the main office in town. But there are no HDTVs, fancy cars or upholstery to squander your earnings on – it's all shovels, machine guns and building tools, things you can use to increase your productivity.

As we said, *The Tomorrow Children* feels a lot like work, because most of the gameplay *is* work. But assuming there's more to do in the final release than the alpha (a fair assumption, really), those little magical moments of feeling like the most important person in the world could still serve to make all the hard graft feel worthwhile.

Luke Albigés

THE TOMORROW CHILDREN is being slowly chipped away at by the hard workers at Q-Games. Find out more at: www.q-games.com

“WHAT'S IT LIKE? IT'S A BIT LIKE HAVING A SECOND JOB”

△○×□ You can change your class every time you log on, allowing you to try new things each time you play.

DEVELOPMENT HELL

Things haven't exactly gone smoothly when it comes to *Homefront: The Revolution*'s development. Crytek UK was initially developing the game under the custodianship of THQ. After THQ went bust, Crytek bought the rights to the game, but unfortunately ended up suffering from financial problems of its own. As a result of that, Deep Silver then picked up the game and created its own studio, Deep Silver Dambuster, to finally finish off the development.

IN WEST PHILADELPHIA...

Now this is a story all about how the US resistance is trying to overthrow the North Korean People's Army that now controls the Eastern States of the USA. This follows on from the first *Homefront* game in which the KPA was successfully ousted from their control of America's West coast. The game features a new protagonist, Ethan Brady, as he battles the KPA in the city of Philadelphia.

A BIGGER FRONT

The most significant difference between *The Revolution* and the first *Homefront* game is that this iteration is open-world, as opposed to being linear. We don't know exactly how much freedom you'll be given within the game, but we'd expect the game to have campaign and side missions littered around the game that you'll be free to tackle when you please. The game was shaping up to look impressive from a visual standpoint during development with Crytek and we hope the transition to Deep Silver hasn't affected that.

SCROUNGING FOR SCRAPS

As a resistance fighter, you won't have access to the same tech as the occupying KPA force. What you'll have to do instead, is scavenge resources while you're travelling through *The Revolution*'s fictional Philadelphia and use those materials to craft weapons of your own. The example we've seen in gameplay footage is that you can use materials to make yourself a remotely detonated explosive, strap it to an RC car and then drive it towards your target. Pretty neat.

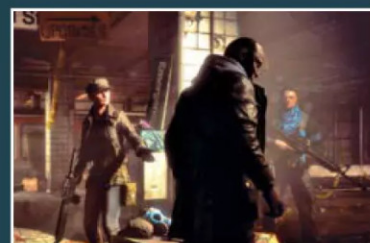
GOING GUERRILLA

The game's developers have said that while they want to give players the freedom to approach objectives as they see fit, they also want to encourage players to use guerrilla tactics that play into the fiction of *Homefront: The Revolution*. This presumably means that you will sometimes have to be cautious about taking on enemies head to head, using the game's larger environments, stealth and crafted weaponry to turn battles in your favour.

SHOULD WE BE WORRIED?



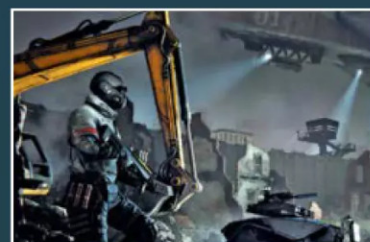
Given that *Homefront: The Revolution* has something of a troubled history having passed through so many hands, concerns naturally emerge about how that turmoil will impact on the game. After all, games that go through these kinds of struggles normally end up suffering.



It's easy to imagine how the financial struggles of the game's various owners could have demoralised those working on the title and you wouldn't really think that will have created an ideal working environment in which to make a game.



The other concern is that as rights to the game passed between different hands, the vision from the top about what *Homefront: The Revolution* should be changed, potentially pulling the team in a variety of different directions and causing the game to lose focus.



That's not necessarily the case, though. Indeed, our hope is that those working on the game have been free to pursue their vision. In that respect, it would seem that Deep Silver Dambuster's core is composed of ex-Crytek UK studio members, the studio that previously had custodianship of the game, so hopefully the transition hasn't been too painful.

Instant Expert

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Homefront: The Revolution



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ETA 30 JANUARY | DEV TECHLAND | PUB WARNER BROS | TWITTER @DYINGLIGHTGAME

Dying Light

When there's no more room in hell, the dead will parkour the Earth



WHEN THEY ERECT the memorial to the men and women lost in the zombie apocalypse, our name won't be on the front. Future generations will circle the obelisk in respectful silence, nodding in deference to those clawed apart by the mob, or who choked on poisonous spittle, or got squashed by a monster with a giant hammer. But nowhere will they find "Rich Wordsworth – Jumped sideways off a roof". Our plaque will be way over on the other side of the cemetery. Locked away in a shed behind a broken birdbath.

Said tumble comes as we're trying to work out *Dying Light*'s free-running system. Our demo begins on top of a safe house – in this case a great big tower with ziplines to carry us down into the infested streets below. We manage to jump our way down quickly with just a press of R1, but scrambling over things is also done by pressing the same button once you get close to them. Pressed contextually as you're fleeing a horde of undead and you might vault over a wall, or pull yourself up onto a roof. Or if you're already on a roof, you might jump off it to your death, as we quickly discover.

It's not a very long fall – we could rattle off a dozen PlayStation heroes who could make it without so much as a gammy ankle. But it's a harsh lesson about one of the game's central tenets: you are not a superhero. Yes, on the face of it, *Dying Light* is a sandbox game about beating zombies round the head with pipe wrenches, but our time with the game is just as much about picking our battles, and running away screaming when they pick us instead.

Take our first mission (plucked from some way into the story), for example. We've gallantly offered to cross the city to get some anti-zombification medicine for some of our fellow survivors. The need is pressing, so we're going at night. The other survivors look worried and ask if we're sure. We're not, but our character is, so off we head into blackness armed with a nothing more than a half-knackered spanner and some fireworks.

We were right to be concerned. Fighting zombies in the day is manageable in *Dying Light* – they're slower and easier to dodge, and cobbling together an escape plan on the fly is doable, if not always comfortable. But in the dark, different, more aggressive breeds emerge and actively hunt for



"IT'S A HARSH LESSON ABOUT ONE OF THE GAME'S CENTRAL TENETS: YOU ARE NOT A SUPERHERO"

you. In short bursts, you can use your torch to light your way, but zombies will react to light and shamle over to investigate. You've also got a Batman-esque survivor sense which highlights dangerous enemies as wobbling orange skeletons. So for the most part, our journey is a softly-softly tip-toe-ing between abandoned cars, watching for enemies and tossing out fireworks to distract them as we slip past.

And for an action game, it's surprisingly tense. If you're spotted in the dark by one of the tougher monsters, your weapons are about as effective as swearing – so instead of fighting, you end up blundering madly over walls and rooftops to escape. We did this, and ended up in a pitch-black copse of trees. We shuffled about on our knees, listening to the monsters milling about and dribbling somewhere nearby. We wouldn't call what we saw of the game 'survival horror' – there's too much daylight and gleeful, splattery ragdoll-ising for that to really apply – but little breath-holding moments like this mean it gets pleasingly close.

Instead, *Dying Light* feels like exactly what it is: *Dead Island*, but with pointers taken from the better games that have come out in the interim. There's an easy comparison to be made with *Mirror's Edge*'s first-person free-running, and it's a fair one – but then there's also the first-person clambering we do up a radio tower, which rips a page straight from the playbook of Brody and Ghale's *Far Cry* expeditions. Then there's your home base; a *Last Light* Metro station right down to the makeshift crèche.

There wasn't anything in our time with the game that screamed novelty – at its heart, it's still a free-roaming, co-operative journey to bash different breeds of zombie back to death. But *Dying Light* is cribbing from the right places, and is, for now, the zombie game to watch.

Rich Wordsworth

DYING LIGHT is being developed by Techland. Free-run your way over to their website for more details: <http://dyinglightgame.com/>



△×□ Fun fact: zombies really love bunting. It's their favourite thing in the whole world. Well, except for brains. Those guys really love brains...



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ You're not a zombie-slayer and *Dying Light* will punish those who think that they are.
- Think *Mirror's Edge* at the end of the world and you're on the right track.
- × It's built entirely for new-gen consoles and the visuals reflect this.
- We're still not quite burned out on zombies just yet.

VIRTUAL BRUTALITY



What's worse than falling off a rooftop into the grasping hands of the dead? Doing it in virtual reality. After we've had our fill of climbing radio towers and delivering plot devices, our session ends with a preview of *Dying Light* on an Oculus Rift. Sadly, though, while Techland are chatting to Sony and experimenting with Morpheus, a VR-enabled version of the game may never make it to consoles.

"We're playing around with Morpheus," says lead game designer Maciej Binkowski. "The thing is, to make [*Dying Light*] work in VR it really needs a powerful machine. Incredibly powerful. We need to render each scene twice in a resolution higher than 1080p. It has to run at 75fps. That's a lot. And at this point, that's impossible to get on PS4. There's just not enough computing power." Boo.



ANATOMY OF... JACKET

The nameless protagonist of *Hotline Miami* has become iconic, despite the fact that we know little about him. He won't return in *Hotline Miami 2*, but his legacy looms over the sequel...

MIDNIGHT ANIMAL

In the aftermath of the events of the first game, *Hotline Miami 2* sees various characters emulating Jacket. It seems somewhat like a commentary on the response to the first game, which will come as no surprise to those familiar with *Hotline Miami*'s surreal and self-referential style of storytelling.

DIY VIOLENCE

Dennaton Games has said there won't be a *Hotline Miami 3*. However, that doesn't quite mean that you won't have more *Hotline Miami* to play once you're done with *Hotline Miami 2*'s campaign. The reason for that is that the game will include a level editor, which looks awesome. We'll probably be rubbish at making levels, but we bet there will be some user-made crackers.

MASKED MURDER

Each of Jacket's masks comes with a special ability and it seems that this will also be the case in the sequel. However, *Hotline Miami 2*'s cast have their own abilities. The 'Pig Butcher', the movie version of Jacket, for example, appears to have a longer combo window, while Jacket fan Corey can roll and dive to avoid gunfire.

LIKE HURTING PEOPLE?

As much as we love *Hotline Miami*'s narrative, a large part of the game's appeal lies with its action and replay value. As such, once you're done with the story, the game is all about going back to previous levels, refining your runs and getting those A+ ratings on every level and we fully intend to do the same with *Hotline Miami 2*.

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Hotline Miami 2: Wrong Number



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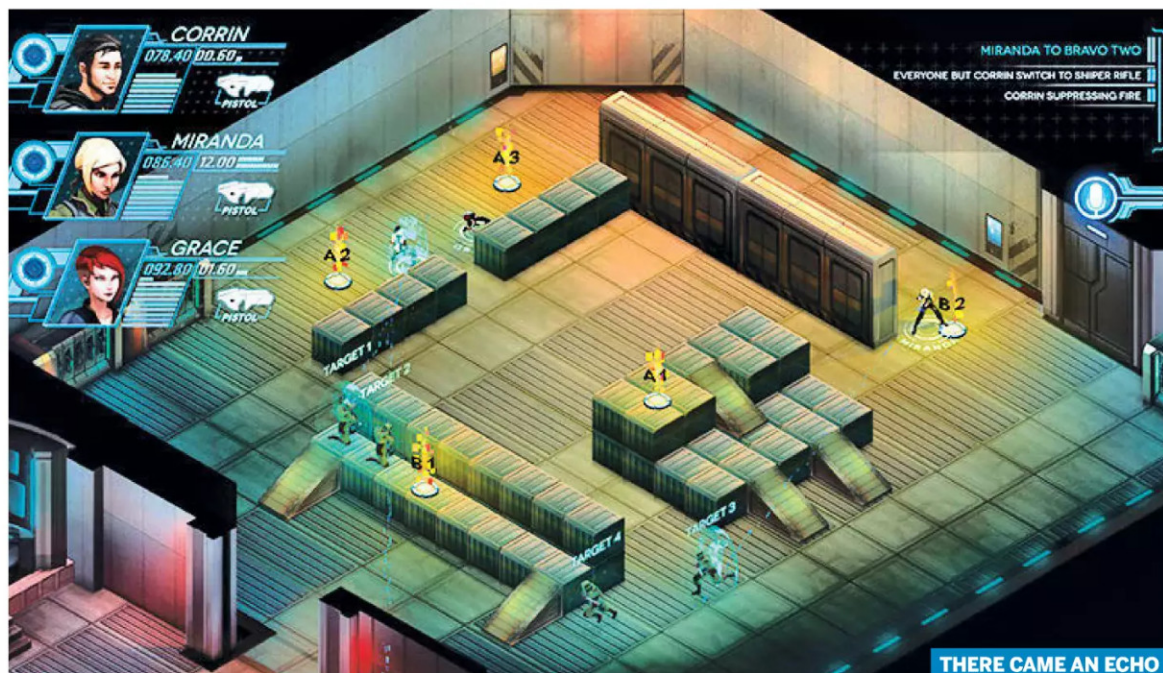
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PREVIEW ROUND-UP



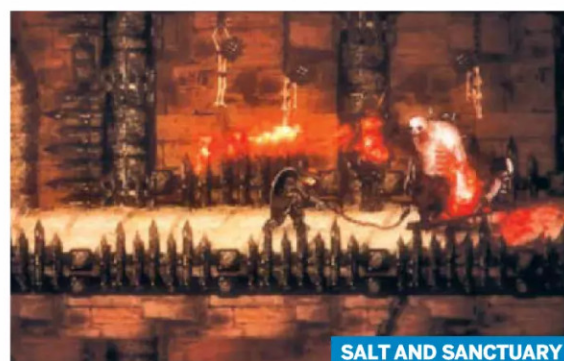
WE HAVE TO be honest; when we heard that **THERE CAME AN ECHO** was a voice controlled RTS, we were a little bit skeptical, given that voice controls haven't exactly had the greatest success over recent years. We're not going to write the game off just yet, though, especially as the option to control it with your DualShock 4 is there as well. Though it's real-time rather than turn-based, the influence of *XCOM* is clear to see; keeping your units in cover appears to be critical as you try to flank and take down enemies. Developer Iridium says that there is a strong narrative focus in *There Came An Echo*, with the game telling a story about a group of individuals who find themselves embroiled in a conflict over a new piece of technology that will change the world. Given its similarity to *XCOM*, it's a game we'll certainly be happy to give a go. As you can customise voice commands to whatever you like, perhaps we'll even be tempted to try out those voice controls.

A game that we suspect we'll be waiting some time to give a go is **HELLBLADE**. If you're wondering



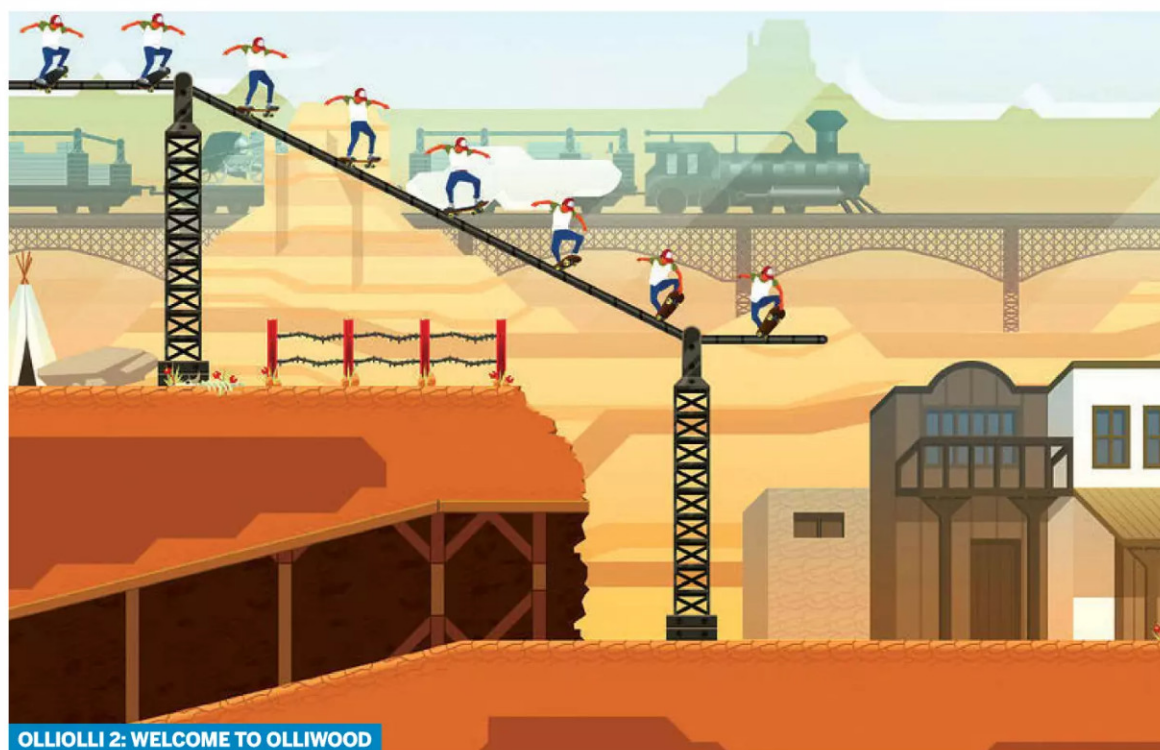
why, that's because, despite the fact that it was unveiled at Gamescom, *Hellblade* doesn't really exist yet. Developer Ninja Theory made the unusual decision to reveal the project early, because it wants to share the process of developing the game as it works on it. The game will tell the story of the character we saw in *Hellblade's* reveal trailer, a woman named Senua. Drawing on Norse mythology, we will see Senua descending into the depths of the underworld of Helheim. As to what you'll actually be doing when you play the game, combat will be the focus. Ninja Theory has said that it wants to get away from the trend of relying on stats-based upgrades, crafting and progression systems and to make a combat system that relies on the player's skill, rather than what abilities and upgrades they have unlocked. If the combat's anywhere near as good as in Ninja Theory's previous game, *DmC Devil May Cry*, then count us in.

One game that we're pretty confident will have excellent combat is the next game from Ska Studios, **SALT AND SANCTUARY**. The game's dark and distinctive artstyle, while thematically different, reminds us of one of the studio's previous games, the brilliant *The Dishwasher: Vampire Smile*. It's that game that shows us that Ska Studios knows how to do combat, so we're hoping the craft it showed will also be evident here. The game's been described by some as a 2D *Dark Souls* and, when you look at the design of the world, its enemies and some of the mechanics on show, you can indeed see that influence. Unlike the aforementioned *Vampire*





HELLBLADE



OLLIOLLI 2: WELCOME TO OLLIWOOD

“THIS UPDATE SHOULD PROVIDE AN IDEAL OPPORTUNITY TO JUMP IN ON THE NOTORIOUSLY HARDCORE ACTION-RPG”



OLLIOLLI 2: WELCOME TO OLLIWOOD

Smile, it seems that *Salt And Sanctuary* will have more RPG elements, so it'll be interesting to see how Ska Studios incorporates that with the action.

Moving on from an original IP to a sequel, those of you who enjoyed Roll7's 2D skater *OlliOlli* will be delighted to hear that it's getting a follow-up on both PS4 and Vita this year. **OLLIOLLI 2: WELCOME TO OLLIWOOD** is bringing a lot of new stuff to the series, too. For one thing, the game will now have split routes within levels, as well as ramps, jumps and “epic hills” added to make runs more spectacular. Roll7 says that it wants to add a level of depth to the game's combo system. That means there will now be manuals, reverts, revert manuals and grind switching added to the player's arsenal. Last but not least, *OlliOlli 2* will introduce a split-screen multiplayer mode called Combo Rush that tasks players with ramping up the biggest score possible in a set time limit. Despite coming soon after the first game, it seems that enough is being added to *OlliOlli 2* to make a sequel worthwhile.



DARK SOULS II: SCHOLAR OF THE FIRST SIN

DESPITE FROM SOFTWARE'S previous insistence that it had no plans for a PS4 release of *Dark Souls II*, plenty of people argued that, just as with *GTA V*, a current-gen version was inevitable. Well, those people have been proved correct, meaning that those of you who have been holding out will finally be able to get your hands on one of the most acclaimed games of 2014 when it comes to PS4 this year.

As you'd expect, the fancy new version of the game, subtitled *Scholar Of The First Sin*, will take advantage of the power of the PS4 to present us with updated graphics and visual enhancements to the original. Additionally, the story will be expanded in the new version, introducing new events and characters, as well as deadlier enemies. The three

AVAILABLE ON: PS4 **RELEASE DATE:** 2015

downloadable add-ons that have been released for *Dark Souls II* will also be a part of the package, as will be general gameplay enhancements and an increase to the number of participants allowed in multiplayer.

All that stuff's great, but the fact is *Dark Souls II* is already an excellent game. We'd even go so far as to say it's one of the best of 2014, which is exactly why we gave the game 90% back in issue 242 when we reviewed the PS3 version. For that reason we're delighted that it's going to be getting a definitive edition for PS4. For those of you who saw this re-release coming and were holding out, or those of you who missed it on PS3, for whatever reason, this update should provide an ideal opportunity to jump in on the notoriously hardcore action-RPG.

BACK TO THE COUCH

How local multiplayer is back in fashion, and the games you should be playing when your mates come over for a great gaming session



Up until recently, local multiplayer looked to be becoming a thing of the past. Crushed under the hefty boot of online play, those days of getting together with friends, laughing, shouting and whooping while you played *TimeSplitters 2*, *Tony Hawk's* HORSE mode, or even one of the many amusingly crap *WWE* games, seemed consigned to a place in the nostalgia wing of the Videogame History Museum.

On the contrary, local multiplayer is experiencing something of a revival and it's being led by indies. For the big studios, the money is always going to be in online multiplayer, but there are a raft of small developers whose favourite gaming memories were born from playing videogames whilst sat on a sofa beside friends. It's those developers that are building games specifically designed to create those moments that you only get when you are in the same room with other human beings, games that shine when there is an audience to cheer for you and poke fun at the competitors.

Indeed, part of the reason that local multiplayer is experiencing a renaissance is that there's something compelling about seeing real people play against each other in person. The likes of *Sportsfriends* built their reputation on the exhibition scene where the game drew crowds that found themselves getting engaged by what was going on and wanting to get involved themselves. Look at the trailer for *Speakeasy* as another example – it shows people reacting to playing the game as much as it does the game itself. The reason it does that is that when you see the crowds cheering, players laughing and fist pumping, you instantly get that it's the fact that the game can illicit those responses that makes it, and local multiplayer as a whole, special.



△○×□ We promise that you won't stop laughing when you sit down to play *Gang Beasts* with friends.

It's not only indies that are breathing new life into local multiplayer, though. With the addition of Share Play to PS4, Sony could just be giving sofa gaming another little boost. Sure, in allowing you to virtually pass a pad over to a friend online, Share Play doesn't provide the pure experience of playing with a friend in the same room, but there is a way in which it does tap into the spirit of local multiplayer. Was not part of the fun about playing all those classic multiplayer games back in the day that you were introducing each other to new games, sharing stuff that others perhaps didn't have? In allowing you to invite a friend to join you in playing a game that they don't own, Share Play allows us to share games with friends once again, even if they are separated by distance.

As a result of facilitating and enabling that desire to share, Share Play can be a boon to the local multiplayer genre. Indeed, we've heard anecdotal tales of people being introduced to and won over by the likes of *Towerfall: Ascension* through Share Play. In fact, *Towerfall* is an interesting example. Many people were put off that game because they weren't in a position where they would be able to get friends round to play, or because they understandably weren't prepared to go out and buy another expensive PS4 controller. Share Play means we don't have to worry about that. Developers can focus on making a game that's 100 per cent built for local multiplayer, safe in the knowledge that they need not necessarily lose sales because people can't afford a new controller or don't live in close proximity to their friends and will be put off their game as a result. In that sense, Share Play is an excellent way of supporting developers who want to continue making local multiplayer games and that can only be a good thing, because really we want to see more games like these...

“WITH THE ADDITION OF SHARE PLAY TO PS4, SONY COULD JUST BE GIVING SOFA GAMING ANOTHER LITTLE BOOST”

NIDHOGG - PS4/VITA

Nidhogg is an exhilarating multiplayer game with possibly the best sword fighting mechanics in any game ever. The objective is to get to the end of the level to be consumed by a giant worm that we presume is the titular Nidhogg. In order to do that, you need to kill your opponent, allowing you to push forward to the next screen before they respawn. As you carefully feint and jab at your nemesis with your sword, you'll realise that the combat is surprisingly deep, providing you with a counter to every tactic, whether that be disarming an opponent, knocking them down or even lobbing your sword at them from distance. The momentum shifts that occur as you battle make *Nidhogg* an intensely satisfying local multiplayer game.



SPORTSFRIENDS - PS4/PS3

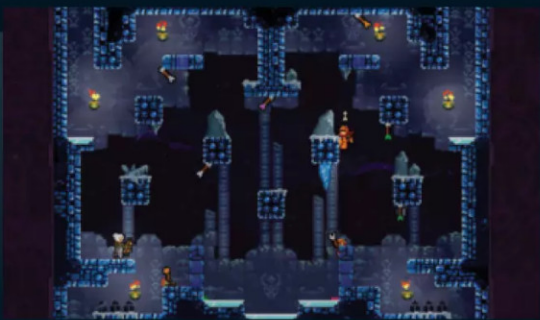
A compilation of four multiplayer games (and a couple of hidden ones), *Sportsfriends* is a great package for anyone who enjoys playing with friends. *Sportsfriends* includes *Johann Sebastian Joust*, a game in which you have to try and keep a Move controller or DualShock stable whilst trying to knock your competitors to eliminate them; *BaraBariBall*, which is a bit like Smash Brothers with a beach ball; *Super Pole Riders*, a pole vaulting game in which you have to knock a ball suspended on a rope above you into a goal; and *Hokra*, a game that plays a little like top down ice hockey, the difference being that you score points by keeping the puck in your team's zones. In short, *Sportsfriends* is a game with loads to offer.



GANG BEASTS - PS4

We can't tell you how delighted we are that *Gang Beasts* has been announced for PS4. We've played a bit of it in the office on PC and trust us when we say that it is bloody brilliant. This multiplayer brawler involves trying to throw your opponents out of the environment or into hazards in order to win. You can control each of your arms separately, which allows you to, for example, grab someone's back and hold onto them while you repeatedly punch them in the head. This also leads to some particularly great moments as you desperately cling on to foes that are trying to chuck you over the edge of the level and then somehow manage clamber your way back up onto the stage. We can't wait for this game to hit PS4 later this year.





TOWERFALL: ASCENSION - PS4

Towerfall: Ascension does actually have a single-player mode, but nobody's really playing it for that, because it's multiplayer where it shines. It's an arena combat game in which you've got a limited amount of arrows with which to take out your foes. Once you're out of arrows, you can rely on head stomps or grabbing the arrows that have already been fired. The most awesome option, though, is to replenish your stocks by catching your competitors' arrows in mid-air. Though simple at its base, once you wrap your head around its mechanics, *Towerfall* can become incredibly deep, rewarding those who are skillful and precise. In other words, you and your friends can get fiercely competitive with this one.

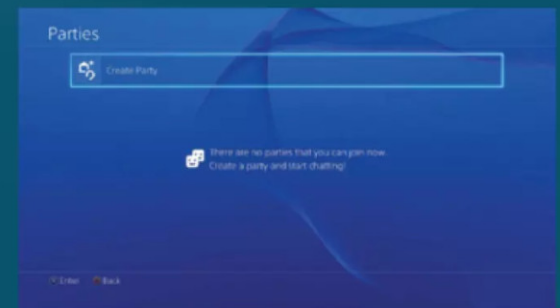


STARWHAL: JUST THE TIP - PS4

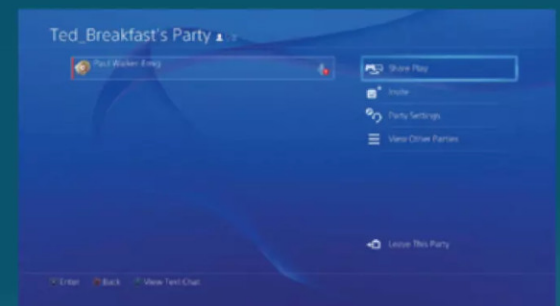
The gloriously silly *Starwhal* is game in which you must pierce the heart of your opponents using the tip of your Starwhal's horn. Unlike some of the other games on our list, *Starwhal* opts for having its creatures control a bit clumsily rather than trying to make an incredibly tight action game. That's a decision that proves to work in this case, making the game wonderfully chaotic as four players weave, twist and flop about each other. Alongside the standard deathmatch, *Starwhal* also has a number of other modes that play with the standard formula. Pleasingly, these other modes are immensely fun. Get a group of four friends together to play this when it comes to PS4 and we promise you'll enjoy it.

SHARE PLAY: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

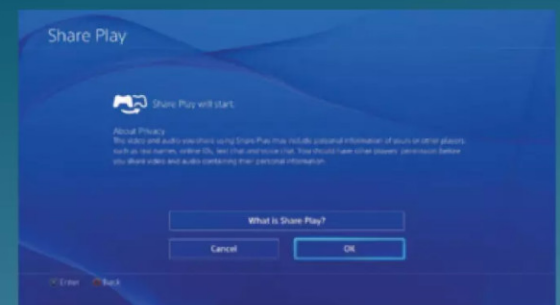
1 If you want to use Share Play with a friend online, the first thing you need to do is create a party and have them join it.



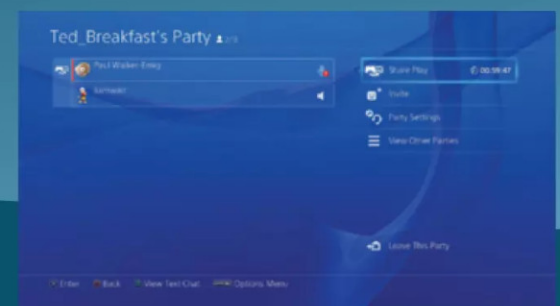
2 Wait until your friend has joined your party and then select 'Share Play' on the top right of the party menu.



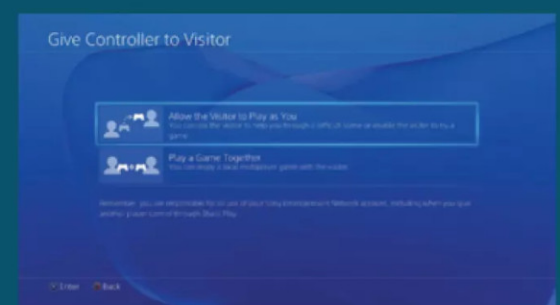
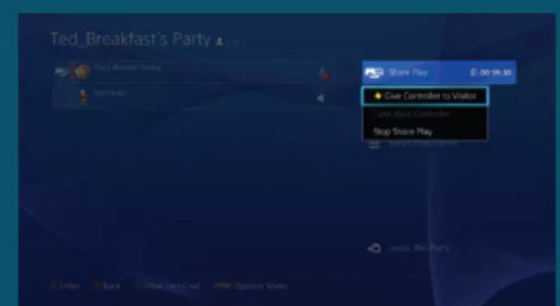
3 Your friend should get a message pop up inviting them to join, or can manually select 'Join Share Play' on the menu.



4 You should have a timer next to 'Share Play' indicating that the session has begun. Select 'Share Play' and then 'Give Controller To Visitor' (if you trust them!).



5 You now have the choice of letting your friend play as you, or giving them the option to jump in and play multiplayer.





PS4 EVOLUTION

How your favourite games are better on PS4

ADVENTURE

The adventure genre has been a mainstay of the gaming world for almost four decades. How is it possible to drag an ancient genre into the future? Nick Thorpe investigates...

It might seem odd that the idea of exploration wasn't always part of videogames, but it's true – while adventure games are ancient in videogame terms, gamers who got hooked on *Pong* had to wait a good five years for *Colossal Cave Adventure* if they wanted a game with some actual exploration. Of course, this was in the Seventies and things were rather more primitive back then, to the point that *Colossal Cave Adventure* and its many imitators didn't actually have graphics. In these text-based adventures, you'd read a description of the area you were visiting and then proceed to interact by typing fully capitalised phrases like 'GO EAST' or 'ATTACK DWARF'. The staunchest proponent of the text adventure was Infocom, a company which enjoyed huge

make a major impact on the genre with *Maniac Mansion* before the end of the Eighties, and went on to produce the popular *Monkey Island* series – one of the funniest series of videogames ever made. In Japan, graphic adventures also grew in popularity during the Eighties, thanks to games like Enix's detective-themed *Portopia Serial Murder Case* and Hideo Kojima's *Snatcher*.

Point-and-click adventures were an established genre by the time the PSone hit the shelves in 1995, and accounted for a good number of early releases such as *Discworld*, *Broken Sword* and *Clock Tower*. CD-ROM technology had brought new levels of sophistication including FMV scenes and full voice acting, though in the case of *Discworld* we could have done without Eric Idle chatting away while we tried to figure out the

“POINT-AND-CLICK ADVENTURES ARE A HOT PROPERTY IN NOSTALGIC TERMS”

success with the likes of the *Zork* series and *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*.

While Infocom doggedly refused to let text and graphics mix until the late Eighties, other companies were pressing ahead with graphical adventures throughout the decade. On-Line Systems – later Sierra Online – pioneered them at the beginning of the decade and achieved major success with the *King's Quest* games, while ICOM Simulations introduced the point-and-click interface with *Deja Vu* in 1985. LucasArts would also

game's obtuse puzzles. There was also a short-lived fad for FMV-based adventure games like *Psychic Detective* and *The X-Files Game*, which we've since tried in vain to forget.

While those titles did appear on the PlayStation, they were always computer games first and foremost – major adventure publishers like LucasArts and Sierra kept their point-and-click games on PC, as the common use of a mouse made it the most sensible platform for the genre. The genre went into decline in the late Nineties despite the high quality of releases like *Grim Fandango*, and by the end of the decade it was hard to find a traditional graphical adventure, point-and-click or otherwise. This is because the adventure game genre was evolving further, implementing direct control of the player character and co-opting elements of other genres – a trend clearly evident in Quantic Dream's *Fahrenheit*, one of the PS2's most renowned adventure games.

5 THINGS ADVENTURE GAMES NEED



PLOT

The modern adventure game is all about storytelling – if you can't tell a convincing story, the battle is already lost. If you get it right, though, players will forgive an awful lot.



ENVIRONMENTS

The earliest adventure games were about the destination as much as the journey, and getting the setting right makes all other elements of the game fall into place easier.



CHARACTERS

Interaction is the key to good adventure games, and your characters provide the human component needed to drive the story forward. Character depth helps create the illusion of reality.



CHALLENGES

The non-human level of interaction is provided by your challenges – previously limited to puzzles, adventure games now tend to borrow scenarios from a wide range of different genres.



INTERFACE

Interfaces define what the player can do during the adventure – retro point-and-click designs make for slower-paced adventures, modern context-sensitive designs grant freedom.



The state of the genre today is now quite complex, as the last generation has seen old gameplay styles revived and refashioned for today's audience. The visual novel – a distinctly Japanese take on the graphical adventure – was popularised in the West thanks to Capcom's *Ace Attorney* series. While that has never appeared on the PlayStation consoles, the Vita now hosts a number of excellent examples such as *Virtue's Last Reward* and the *Danganronpa* series. As the Vita seems to have become something of a refuge for gamers seeking some of Japan's more unusual exports, we would imagine more of them will be translated into English.

Additionally, traditional graphic adventures are back in vogue. Telltale Games has done some good work with licensed series like *The Wolf Among Us*, *The Walking Dead*, and more recently, *Game Of Thrones* and *Borderlands* and is one of today's leading adventure games developers. An interesting facet of Telltale Games' adventures is that they're exclusively episodic games, a development that's very much a product of the online age. Though it's not the first developer to promise an episodic approach to adventure games, it is arguably the first to consistently deliver upon it by reliably scheduling its releases. Existing adventure series such as *Sam & Max* and *Monkey Island* have also been handled well by Telltale.

It's not just Telltale flying the adventure flag, as traditional point-and-click adventures are a hot property in nostalgic terms right now. Tim Schafer's Double Fine Productions managed to raise almost \$3.5 million on Kickstarter for *Broken Age*, an adventure much like the LucasArts ones on which Schafer built his reputation. Additionally, fellow LucasArts alumni Ron Gilbert and Gary Winnick recently funded their own game, *Thimbleweed Park*, in the same way. Even Activision has revived the

Modern adventure games have come to rely heavily on cinematic storytelling techniques.





△××□ Storytelling is key to the adventure genre, but visual advances can aid even the best of plots.

GAME CHANGER: SHENMUE



Yu Suzuki's Dreamcast epic promised a fully explorable living world, and while it fell slightly short of delivering that, it did manage to revolutionise the adventure genre. Many of the classic elements of the point-and-click adventures were included in this tale of revenge – progress often required gathering information from bystanders, though puzzles and item-gathering also served their fair share of situations.

However, it also pioneered the direct character control and appropriation of outside genres that has been critical to the survival of the adventure genre. Minor action sequences were represented through the QTE system, combat sequences employed a full fighting engine and one-off specials allowed Ryo to drive. The game's cinematic presentation was a revelation when it arrived in 2000 too, but it is now commonplace.

Many modern adventure titles take their cues from *Shenmue* – you can detect traces of its DNA in David Cage's games and even Rockstar's *LA Noire*. While a certain section of the game's fanbase will never accept the idea that the *Shenmue* series might never reach a third game, Sega has shown its ability to port popular Dreamcast games to modern platforms – why it hasn't done *Shenmue* yet is a mystery.

Sierra brand for adventure games, with a return to the *King's Quest* series as its first product. Of these, only *Broken Age* is confirmed to be PS4-bound at present, but it can only be a matter of time before Sony's machine sees more of a benefit from this movement – we can't imagine Activision passing up a lucrative opportunity.

However, adventure games on the PS3 most broadly resembled the likes of *Fahrenheit*, and that's a trend you can expect to see continuing. Past adventure games had been defined by their interfaces – the text-based parser or mouse-driven interaction. Quantic Dream's game further developed the concept of a cinematic game in which the interface was secondary to

sequences is not just justifiable, but standard practice – pressing X to do a different thing in each scene has been commonplace since *Shenmue* revived the much-derided mechanic. This compromised approach is likely behind the team's decision to include support for the Move controller when it became available in 2010 – as players, we're used to thinking of buttons as having fixed functions, but our own hands are obviously accepted as versatile tools. With Move PS4-compatible but largely off the agenda, it seems likely that we'll continue to shift between various pad-based control schemes during the course of adventure games for some time to come.

As for cinematic play, it was a huge part of

“IF YOU HATED LA NOIRE ON PS3, YOU'D HATE IT ON A COMMODORE 64 TOO”

the story being told, with controls tailored to best fit the scene being shown. It's a common approach that has persisted for around 15 years, but it is a slightly awkward one that is still in some need of refinement.

This is best illustrated with one of Quantic Dream's own PS3 games, *Heavy Rain*. In a game in which characters needed to be able to perform a variety of different actions depending on the context involved, the heavy use of QTE

Rockstar's *LA Noire*, a rather action-heavy exponent of the adventure genre. With lots of dialogue thanks to its interrogation scenes, there was plenty of scope for character interaction at the pace of a film. The key coup for the developer was its use of technology – facial animations were created using a motion-capture technique in which actors' faces were recorded from 32 different camera angles in order to achieve greater realism. This worked, but the effect was somewhat jarring

PS3 INSPIRATION



FLESHED OUT

Telltale's use of the episodic model for *The Walking Dead* has been a major success, proving that adventure games can work well in shorter, non-epic form. Expect to see more of this in the future, with games sold in seasonal terms.



BACK IN BLACK

LA Noire did a lot of impressive things, especially on a technical level with its use of detailed motion capture of the face. However, there was a detail deficit between animation of the face and the body – one which the PS4 can narrow.



ONE STEP BEYOND

While David Cage's approach to videogames and narrative presentation isn't everyone's cup of tea, the man most certainly has an audience and *Beyond: Two Souls* proves that. Digital actors will look closer to their real-life counterparts than ever before on PS4, too.



△××□ The prolific Telltale's flow of high quality episodic adventure games has rejuvenated the genre.



Walk to door
Give Pick up Use
Open Look at Push
Close Talk to Pull



as bodies and clothing didn't animate as well as the characters' faces. This is something that will obviously be possible to improve in the coming years, but utilising the PS4 to that extent will be the domain of the AAA developer.

With the budgets afforded to such developers frequently hitting Hollywood levels, it's no surprise that the PS3 saw big-screen talent utilised as a way to draw players in. It makes some level of sense – with motion-captured animations and full voice acting now standard storytelling tools within the genre, it makes sense to call upon actors who can not only do both to a high standard, but lend a little star power to the game while they're at it. This was the rationale behind Ellen Page and Willem Dafoe showing up in *Beyond: Two Souls*, a move which worked out – though it might have been better had Ellie from *The Last Of Us* not resembled Ellen Page quite so closely. With development costs rising, more publishers are increasingly willing to stake huge amounts of cash on a single game, so don't be surprised if you see more talent acting out roles in future adventures.

It might seem odd that we've spent so much time talking about technology, control schemes

and acting talent, but the truth is that adventure games are usually about telling a good story. But the ability to tell a story is nothing new. Writers can succeed or fail at that, and no amount of technology in the world will alter the outcome – if you hated *LA Noire*'s storyline on PS3, chances are you'd hate it on a Commodore 64 too.

We've always had the ability to tell good stories in our adventure games – what has changed over the years is the tools available to draw players into stories more fully, and that's where the evolution of the genre still lies. Text gave way to graphics, typed commands gave way to mouse selection, and each advance has served to step closer to perfect immersion – more believable visuals, characters that can truly talk in a believable way and a greater range of potential ways for players to interact with what they find.

On a technical level, the PS4 has the potential to deliver the improved visuals, character detail and realistic conversations we want to see. As for improved interaction and the next defining interface of the genre – well, that's something only the developers can reveal.





TOP TEN REBOOTS

SOMETIMES, RATHER THAN A SEQUEL, A SERIES JUST NEEDS A FRESH START. IF SAID REBOOTS NEGLECT TO RESPECT THE LEGACY OF THEIR SOURCE MATERIAL, THEY CAN BE CRUSHINGLY DISAPPOINTING. FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE PLENTY OF REBOOTS THAT HAVE DONE IT RIGHT...



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

THE ORIGINAL WOLFENSTEIN is arguably one of the most influential games of all time. Its 2001 PS2 reboot, *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*, certainly isn't that, but it's a good shooter that reintroduced players to B.J. Blazkowicz, a character who is still going strong in the series' latest entry, *Wolfenstein: The New Order*. *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* is more serious than its source material, but maintains a bit of silliness with its occult elements.



MORTAL KOMBAT

THE NINTH ENTRY in the *Mortal Kombat* series sees Raiden change the timeline of the original games, giving the series a fresh start in narrative terms (not that anyone cares about *Mortal Kombat's* story). It was also a fresh start for *Mortal Kombat* in the sense that it was an improvement over its recent predecessors in gameplay terms. Needless to say, the game is faithful to the series' legacy, by which we mean it is incredibly violent.



TOMB RAIDER

THE 2013 VERSION of *Tomb Raider* didn't quite capture all of the things that made the original games great, losing focus on the puzzle aspect of its platforming and downplaying the whole tomb raiding thing in favour of *Uncharted*-like action sequences as the heroine's origin story is retold. It is, however, a great action adventure game in its own right and one that makes us pleased that Lara Croft is back in the limelight.



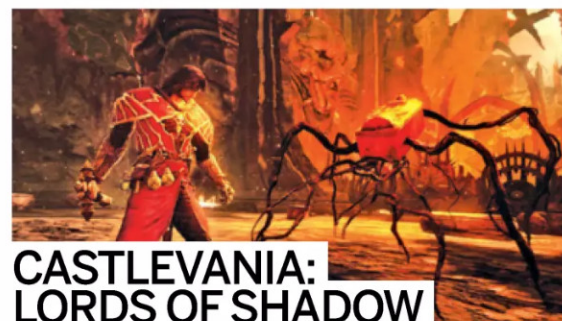
NINJA GAIDEN SIGMA

THIS RETELLING OF the *Ninja Gaiden* series literally added a new dimension to a series that had been a 2D action game up until that point. *Ninja Gaiden's* first 3D outing was also a narrative reboot of the series, though it did reuse the basic premise of the original game, essentially making it a retelling of the same tale. The set up is pretty simple: Ryu Hayabusa is off on a quest for revenge and he's pretty good at cutting people up with swords.



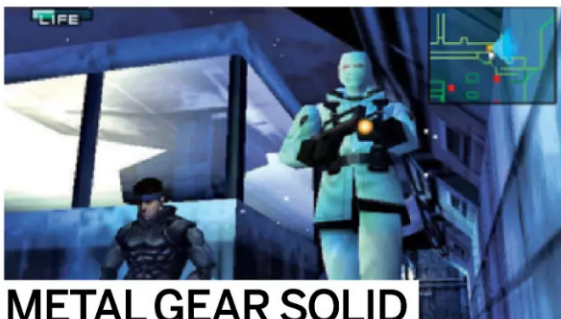
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

THE CLASSIC PLATFORMER *Prince Of Persia*, which started back in 1989, got itself an excellent reboot when *Sands of Time* came to PS2 in 2003. What's great about the game is that it maintains the focus on acrobatic gameplay, which made the original famous, but it does it in a way more fitting for its era. Wall-running and death-defying leaps are balanced with a need to think about how you can use athleticism to progress through the world.



CASTLEVANIA: LORDS OF SHADOW

CASTLEVANIA'S PS3 DEBUT isn't only original in terms of its story, but it takes the *Castlevania* series in a new direction mechanically. Some people felt that it wasn't a true *Castlevania* game because it lacks the Metroidvania elements that the series has become known for. However, go back to the pre-*Symphony Of The Night* *Castlevania* games and you'll see where *Lords Of Shadow* finds influence for its structure.



METAL GEAR SOLID

WE DON'T NEED to explain to you why *Metal Gear Solid* is such a great game, but you might be wondering why we're classing it as a reboot. Alongside the fact that it brought *Metal Gear* into the 3D era, the reason we make this claim is that *MGS* uses many of the exact same scenarios and story beats as the first two *Metal Gear* games. From the fact that *Metal Gear 2* opens inside a hanger with an elevator, to receiving anonymous advice from a character that turns out to be Gray Fox, there is a raft of examples of parallels that support the argument that it's basically a remake. It also added the *Solid* suffix that redefined *Metal Gear*.



DMC DEVIL MAY CRY

SOME FANS OF *Devil May Cry* may have been unhappy that *DmC*'s new Dante didn't have his signature floppy white hair, but that's not something we can honestly say was a problem for us. The *Devil May Cry* games built their reputation on the fact that they are excellent action games and, the fact is, Ninja Theory's *DmC* is exactly that. A game based around combo building, technical skill and score chasing, *DmC* remains faithful to *Devil May Cry*'s key tenets, while also showing Ninja Theory is a studio with their own ideas. The incredible Bob Barbas boss fight stands out as just one example of Ninja Theory's creativity.



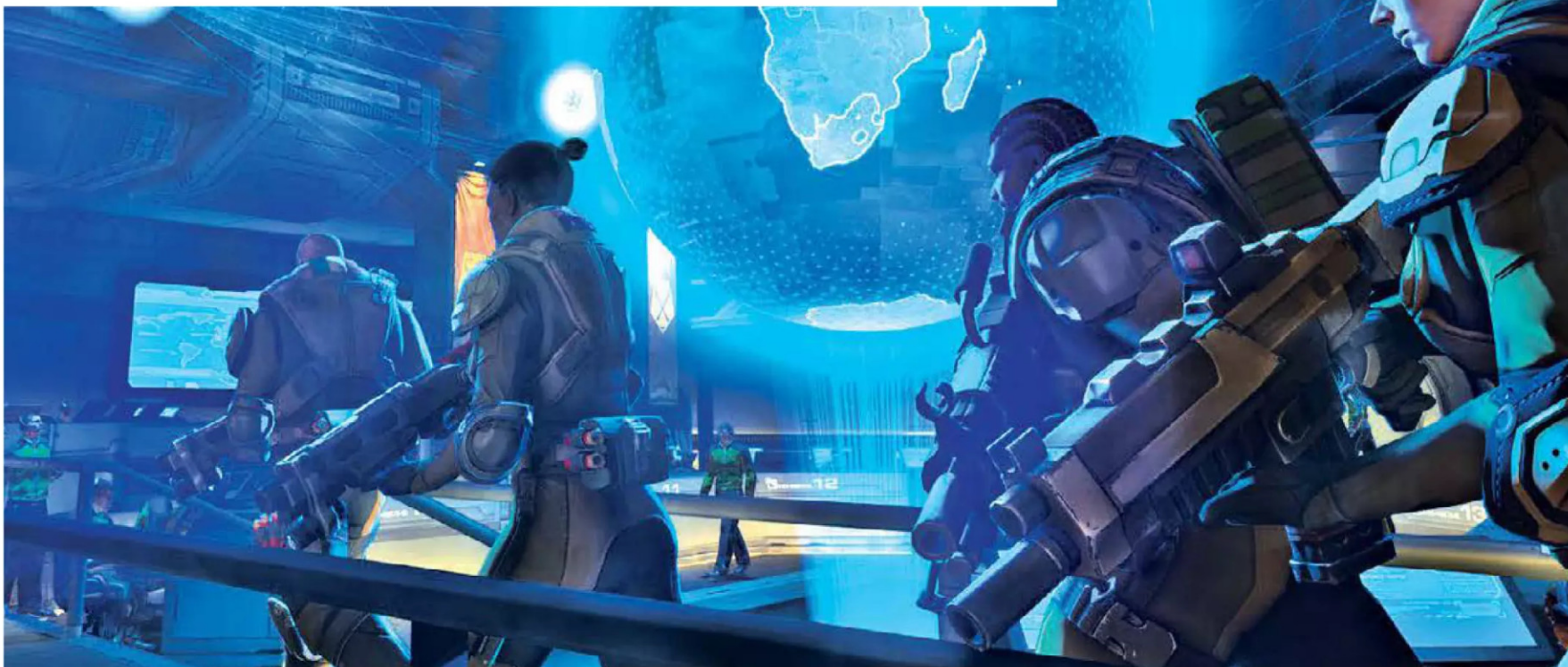
DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

REBOOTING ONE OF the most highly regarded and influential games of all time, in the form of *Deus Ex*, was no easy task. Square Enix did an absolutely stellar job with *Human Revolution*, however. In the way that it lets you customise your character and ensures that those choices have an impact on how each mission plays out, the game retains that sense of freedom and flexibility that made the original special. It also has a similar atmosphere to the first game, its design drawing from the same cyberpunk tradition whilst also having its own identity (by which we mean it has lots of yellow hexagons). If only it didn't have those boss fights...

XCOM: ENEMY UNKNOWN

XCOM TOPS OUR list by virtue of the fact that it perfectly encapsulates what a reboot should be. That is, it places the elements that made the original game successful at its core and makes it accessible to a modern audience without compromising the basic form of its gameplay. With *Enemy Unknown*, the lineage of the original *X-COM* games lies in the way that the game responds to your mistakes. Just as in the original, errors are ruthlessly punished, with the game famously

managing to create surprisingly strong bonds between you and your band of characters because of the fact that you know they can die easily if you screw up and that their death will be permanent. Firaxis also deserves kudos for taking a game that's part of what's seen as a 'PC genre' and showing that those kinds of games can work just as well on console if designed correctly. *XCOM* is both a fantastic game in its own right and a wonderful, loyal homage to the series that it rebooted.





Alternative awards celebrating a great year of gaming



MOST MISUNDERSTOOD GAME

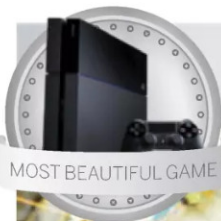


DESTINY

SOME COMPARED IT to shooters, others to RPGs and still more to MMOs. But no matter what you hold it next to, you won't find a fair yardstick with which you can measure *Destiny*. Bungie combined elements of every genre mentioned above (and then some) to create a truly unique FPS experience that taps into the MMO genre without borrowing all of its baggage, so we're not all that surprised that so many people took umbrage with the structure and pacing of the game. But this is something that was planned for long-term playability, that is supposed to run for years, and without the monthly fees that come along with most major MMOs. Console gamers would have been unlikely to get behind that a subscription-based pricing model for a first-person shooter, so Bungie is simply trying to mix up the pricing structure and we can get behind that. Nothing in gaming sends a message quite like money and sales so whether you like it or not, let Activision know with your wallet.

RUNNERS-UP:

WATCH DOGS, NATURAL DOCTRINE, METAL GEAR SOLID V: GROUND ZEROES,



MOST BEAUTIFUL GAME



INFAMOUS: SECOND SON

THERE WERE A lot of great-looking games last year, to be fair. But few blew us away quite like Sucker Punch's take on Seattle. From early morning light painting landmarks in natural glow to the shimmer of a rainy evening coating the city, *Second Son* remains one of the best games with which to show off the power of PS4. The game, while solid, definitely played second fiddle to its graphics, but that's not necessarily a bad thing – the advent of Photo Mode has given Delsin's crew a new meta-game to play, namely seeing who can take the most beautiful picture of virtual Seattle. As much as we thoroughly enjoyed the game, we must admit that we were as obsessed with Photo Mode as the rest of them. That's all because the team made such a gloriously rich world in the first place and we just can't stop marvelling at it.

RUNNERS-UP:

DESTINY, GUILTY GEAR XRD -SIGN-, ALIEN: ISOLATION



BEST REMAKE



GRAND THEFT AUTO V

IT'S A LITTLE strange that this should even be a category. But when Hollywood is still thumbing through the archives looking for classics it hasn't ruined yet, the younger medium of gaming must get something of a free pass here. This early in a generation, it's ridiculous to expect the likes of Naughty Dog and Rockstar to have mastered the new hardware and created brand new things – far better that they test their skills on what they already know and, in the process, deliver definitive versions of some of the best games ever made. *GTA* on PS4 is glorious and even without new stuff like the first-person viewpoint and hours of new radio content, it's a brilliant game. With it, it's something even more spectacular, and we can't wait to see what the team behind this manages when it isn't simply adapting old code and models for a new generation.

RUNNERS-UP: THE BINDING OF ISAAC: REBIRTH, THE LAST OF US REMASTERED, TOMB RAIDER: DEFINITIVE EDITION



JEALOUSY AWARD



BAYONETTA 2

DISCOVERING THAT THE sequel to the awesome *Bayonetta* would be a Wii U exclusive wasn't exactly easy for us. The original rates among the finest games of the last generation (if not all time) and we'd have loved to have seen the Umbran witch in all her 1080p glory on PS4. But in probably the first smart move it has made since green-lighting *Pokemon*, Nintendo made the decision to fund *Bayonetta*'s sequel, meaning we will never see it on anything but Nintendo consoles. It's a crying shame too, since it's every bit as good as the first game, although the classic Nintendo references and cameos in place of the Sega ones in the original do mean it feels sort of at home where it is. Still, at least we have *Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance*, *Devil May Cry* and *God Of War* to scratch our action game itch, so it's not all bad.

RUNNERS-UP:

TITANFALL, FORZA HORIZON 2, CIVILIZATION: BEYOND EARTH



BEST DEMO

BEST DEMO



P.T.

DEMOS GO BY many names these days – trial versions, early access, betas... whatever words you or the developers might choose, the purpose is the same. And while the *Bloodborne* alpha might have got us pumped for From Software's PS4 debut, we always knew it would – this category is

far more fitting for something that took the entire community by surprise. *P.T.* was something that only the hardcore would have gone looking for, and something that only the *really* hardcore would understand for themselves. But they didn't need to – the YouTube generation made sure that you

didn't need to survive *P.T.*'s scares or master its intricacies to learn its secret, and it quickly came to light that it was a clever reveal for a new *Silent Hill* game. And just like that, the world was excited about something it hadn't really cared about in years. Well played, Kojima...

RUNNERS-UP: GUILTY GEAR XRD -SIGN-, BLOODBORNE (ALPHA), METAL GEAR SOLID V: GROUND ZEROES



MOST DISAPPOINTING GAME

MOST DISAPPOINTING GAME



ASSASSIN'S CREED: UNITY

IF YOU TYPE the name of a game into YouTube and the first things that come up are hilarious bugs and glitches, chances are there's more wrong than right with your game. And while that's not entirely true of *Unity* – the core game itself is actually pretty good – the fact that it launched with such a bill of wrongs has made selling its virtues an uphill struggle for Ubisoft. To compound matters, a real-money purchase option for the game's most exclusive gear taps into another current pet hate of the industry, making it even harder to see any of the gaming goodness for red mist. The lesson here? However good a game may or may not be, how it is presented is even more important.

RUNNERS-UP:

WWE 2K15, VALIANT HEARTS: THE GREAT WAR, THE CREW



BEST INDIE GAME

BEST INDIE GAME



TRANSISTOR

WHILE TRIPLE-A GAMES may have slipped time and time again into 2015, the indies have kept the home fires burning and it has been an awesome year for the underdogs. *Rogue Legacy* could have easily claimed this spot, but we instead plumped for something a little more universal in its appeal. *Transistor*, like *Bastion* before it, is a relatively simple action-RPG. But as well as being mechanically brilliant, Supergiant's adventure once again spun an awesome narrative set in a wonderful and visually striking setting, to the point where we can still hear the titular sword talking whenever we think about the game. That has got to count for something, right?

RUNNERS-UP:

THE BINDING OF ISAAC: REBIRTH, VELOCITY 2X, NEVER ALONE



MOST ADDICTIVE GAME



GEOMETRY WARS 3: DIMENSIONS

WE FEEL YOUR pain, Trevor. Just like you thought Michael was dead and had tried to move on with your life, we had assumed that the demise of Bizarre Creations would mean the end of the *Geometry Wars* series. We'd still revisit the 360 version from time to time for a few rounds of late-night Pacifism (still the best game mode in anything, ever) but a new game was never going to happen. Or so we thought, but we couldn't be happier to have been proven wrong. Lucid Games, born from the ashes of Bizarre, did a stellar job in both preserving the old and inventing the new with *Dimensions*, making this first foray onto PlayStation consoles arguably better than the classics that came before it. We're gonna be chasing leaderboards for the foreseeable future and with more modes than ever, the competition need never die.

RUNNERS-UP:

DESTINY, THE BINDING OF ISAAC: REBIRTH, TRIALS FUSION



MOST SURPRISING GAME



DRAGON AGE: INQUISITION

BIOWARE GOT OFF to a great start with *Dragon Age: Origins*, but between needless expansion, *Awakening*, and shocking sequel, *Dragon Age II*, it looked as though this franchise was a lost cause. Fresh from stunning the gaming world with its inability to end a game (twice), BioWare has used its time out of the spotlight brilliantly to return to elements that players loved and really drive the *Dragon Age* series forward in some bold new directions. An epic game (once it gets going), *Dragon Age: Inquisition* is proof that the RPG legend has still got it – playing the game is like hearing a new album from a band you assumed were all dead, yet it still turns out to be amazing. We'd started to lose interest in *Mass Effect 4* but now BioWare has shown promise and you couldn't get us off the Normandy with a thousand crowbars.

RUNNERS-UP:

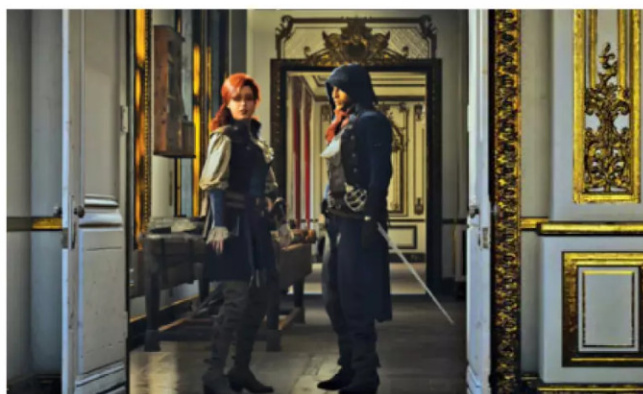
ALIEN: ISOLATION, MIDDLE-EARTH: SHADOW OF MORDOR, PES 2015



WIN!

GAMING GOODIES WORTH OVER

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What was YOUR gaming highlight of 2014? No wait, don't tell us! Find a more interesting way to celebrate your favourite games of the year and whoever can do so in the most entertaining manner shall be richly rewarded. You can send us whatever you like – drawings, music, photos, poetry, cosplay... whatever works for you, as long as it conveys your gaming passion. Then, we'll pick a winner and give them a shiny new PS4 and a bunch of games to play on it. Closing date is 5 February, so send your entries to play@imagine-publishing.co.uk before then, along with your contact details. Good luck!

14 FROM

The must-play PS4, PS3 and Vita games of last year

A. ALIEN: ISOLATION – PS4

DESPITE HAVING NO experience in the horror field, The Creative Assembly (best known for its real-time strategy *Total War* games) somehow managed to make the most authentic *Alien* experience in years. The learning AI of the alien alone makes it worthy of a place here, but the rest of the oppressive action just makes it all the sweeter. In the most horrible way possible.

B. DARK SOULS II – PS3

SOME MIGHT CLAIM that *Dark Souls II* is the worst of From Software's trio of *Souls* games, but the truth is that each has its own strengths and weaknesses. While the bosses in *Dark Souls II* might not be up to the standard of the original *Dark Souls*, for instance, general combat is slightly tighter and improvements to online play mean that many are still duelling today. Roll on the PS4 version...

C. ROGUE LEGACY – PS4/VITA

SURE, YOU MIGHT not have bought your PS4 to see retro-style graphics on your huge HDTV. But a great game is a great game, regardless of whether characters are made from millions of polygons or a few hundred pixels. Venture forth into the random dungeons and your offspring will succeed you – the various traits of each generation are what make this so dangerously addictive.

D. THE LAST OF US REMASTERED – PS4

IF YOU NEVER played it on PS3, this remaster is the best way to enjoy Naughty Dog's bleak and generation-defining adventure. And if you *did* play it on PS3... well, that changes nothing – this is *still* the best way to enjoy Naughty Dog's bleak and generation-defining adventure. A stunning game and a solid port, there are few games that are easier to recommend.

E. GRAND THEFT AUTO V – PS4

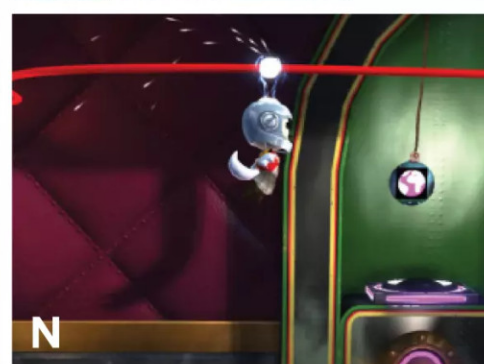
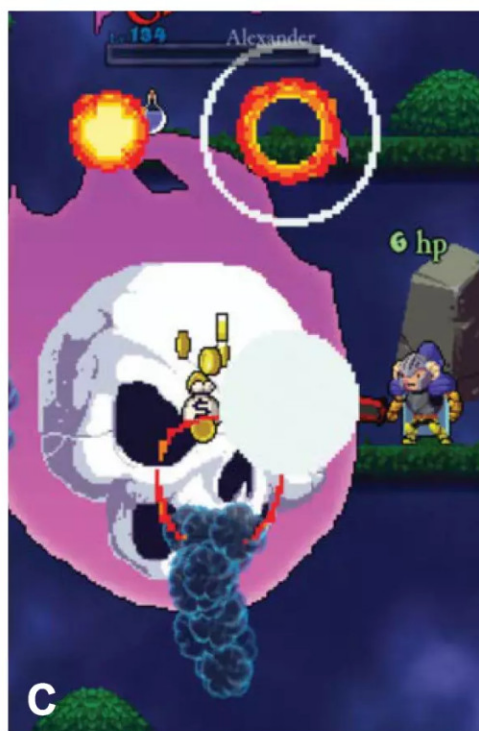
WHILE THE NARRATIVE of *The Last Of Us* might not have *quite* the same impact the second time around, *GTA* manages to impress even more on its encore performance. The world is incredible after being remastered, making those new first-person moments all the more impressive. The city's so much more alive on PS4 that you never know what is going to happen next.

F. WOLFENSTEIN: THE NEW ORDER – PS4

IT'S ALL XP systems, online integration and K/D ratios in shooters these days, which is why *Wolfenstein's* 694th reboot was such a pleasant surprise. A pure solo shooter that harks back to the golden age of FPS action – before there were men to follow and Prestiges to earn all over the place – it's a slice of classic shooter gameplay with none of the modern baggage or bullshit.

G. DIABLO III: REAPER OF SOULS – PS4/PS3

HAVING BLIZZARD ON console is sort of a big deal, and this is why – action-RPGs don't come much better than *Diablo III*, and this spruced up version adds to the original game in such a way that it takes it from practically bottomless to *actually* bottomless. Even when you finally get the Platinum, there's still months' worth of additional content to hack and slash your way through.



2014



G



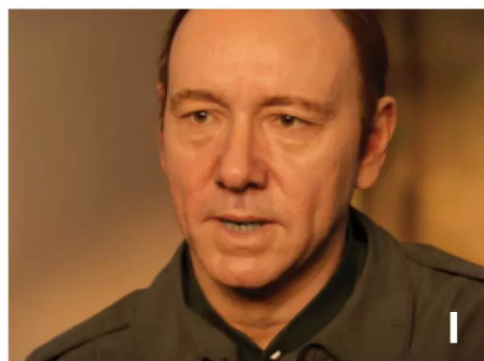
J



K



M



I



H



E

H. DANGANRONPA 2: GOODBYE DESPAIR – VITA

THERE WAS A time when JRPGs were practically unknown in Europe, yet all it took was a few great games (*Final Fantasy VII* and *Suikoden*, we're looking at you) and they were everywhere. There same is true right now of visual novels and between awesome titles like this and *Virtue's Last Reward*, it shouldn't be long before the genre truly breaks out of the Japanese market.

I. COD: ADVANCED WARFARE – PS4/PS3

OH LOOK – A *COD* game in a 'best games of the year' feature. How original. Now shush, you. It's not about being original. It's about celebrating the best games, and Sledgehammer's debut shooter surpassed expectations and managed to rejuvenate a franchise that was in severe danger of growing stagnant. That, right there, is worthy of praise.

J. SHADOW OF MORDOR – PS4/PS3

TRYING TO SELL a *Lord Of The Rings* game without using the branding is freaking bold, but *Shadow Of Mordor* managed it. Fusing Tolkien lore with the best gameplay mechanics from a bunch of different genres worked brilliantly and just as *Dead Space* created something new from a 'greatest hits' package of gaming staples, Mordor too managed to carve out its own niche.

K. THE BINDING OF ISAAC: REBIRTH – PS4/VITA

WE DOUBT MANY people would expect a grim dungeon crawler about a naked baby in a shit-encrusted basement to achieve critical acclaim, yet here it is – Edmund McMillen (of *Super Meat Boy* fame) and the team at Nicalis did a sterling job with this, a descent into all things gross and evil that is nigh impossible to put down and difficult to forget.

L. PES 2015 – PS4/PS3

OLDER READERS WILL no doubt remember the glory years for Konami, when *Pro Evo* was the go-to footy game for anyone who knew what they were buying while *FIFA* was a money pit for idiots. EA got it together, though, and *FIFA* has been top dog for a good few years now, but that just makes it all the more exciting to see *PES* finally reclaim its throne.

M. DESTINY – PS4/PS3

DESTINY IS WORTH playing for yourself to see if it grabs you or not. Some see a lack of content, while others liken it more to a score attack game or grind-heavy RPG – it's not something that you can truly make up your mind on until you hit level 20, at which point you're either in for the long haul or ready to give up. Hopefully the former, because the endgame is great fun.

N. LITTLEBIGPLANET 3 – PS4/PS3

IN A WAY, *LBP3* is more of the same but in another, its additions thrust it onto an entirely new plane of awesomeness. Oddsock alone means that this is worthy of your time, attention and cash moneys, but improvements to the creation suite (and the fact that it already supports all existing user-created levels) mean that this is the ultimate creative experience on PS4.

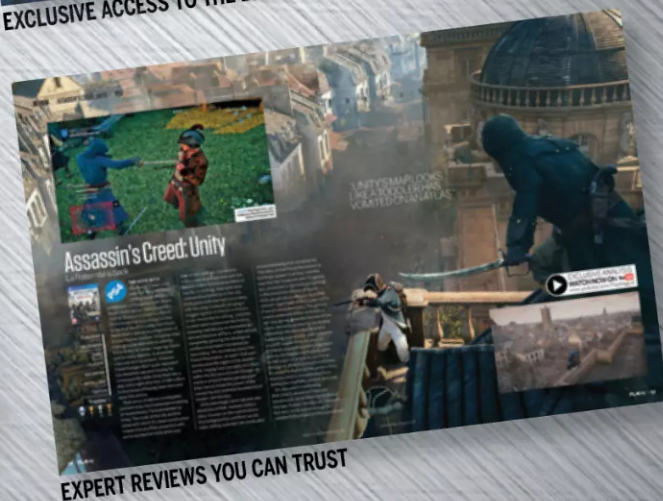
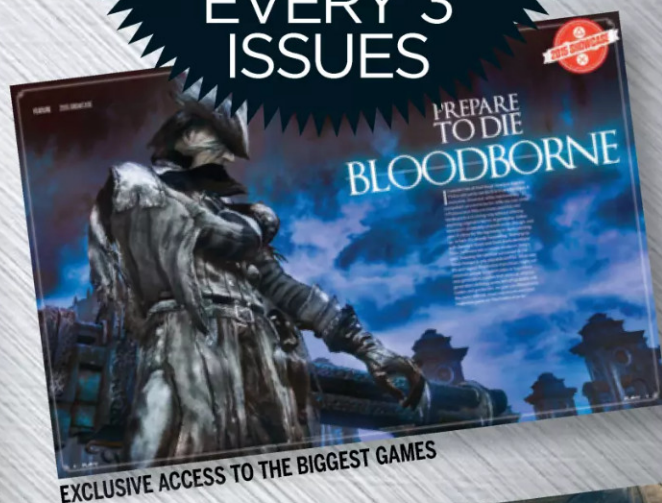
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The Crew

With friends like these, who needs enemies?



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Ubisoft

DEVELOPER
Ivory Tower

RELEASE DATE
Out now

PRICE
£54.99

PLAYERS
1-8

AGE RATING
12+

TWITTER
@TheCrewGame

Trophies 51



THERE ISN'T A single element of *The Crew* that could honestly be described as 'good'. At best, a few elements might manage a 'middling' or perhaps even a slightly generous 'solid' but at worst, you're looking at fundamental problems just begging to be slapped with a 'broken' or an 'awful'. It's such a shame, because the concept is interesting and the fusion of genres is a bold move, but truth be told, it simply doesn't work.

The primary problem stems from the RPG mechanics that serve as the core progression system. In an MMO or even a traditional RPG, you start out underpowered but the systems themselves don't change – whether you're level one and hitting bees with a stick or level 100 and one-shotting dragons and deities, the actual mechanics don't change all that much. Apply that same kind of gear-based upgrade path to a racing game and everything falls apart. Handling in basic cars is just plain bad and while it improves as you layer on rewards and upgrades to level up your ride, the fact that you're starting out in a car that is a nightmare to

drive makes the experience tedious and grind-heavy – you have to put up with the horrible handling until you've played enough of the game to unlock half-decent handling, and that simply isn't a good use of anyone's time.

Even the game's best feature – the pre-shrunk map of the US – proves to be a double-edged sword, offering a commendably large play space but at the same time forcing visual cutbacks to

be made in order to sustain it. The end result is hardly the next generation of racing games genre fans will want to see, and even after arriving incomplete and a year late, *Driveclub* runs rings around *The Crew* both in terms of visuals and social integration. It looks okay and holds together relatively well, but it's not even like the graphics matter anyway – when glitches, bugs and shoddy physics are this prevalent, *The Crew* could be





△×□ Timed missions and races aren't too bad, but any mission involving trashing a moving target is inevitably awful.



"THE CREW COULD BE GENUINELY PHOTO-REALISTIC AND IT'D STILL LOOK LIKE SHIT"



genuinely photo-realistic and it'd still look like shit. It's the physics that let it down the most, largely due to how unpredictable everything is. Slam into the rear of a traffic car and you could blast it off the road without hardly slowing down, be sent spiralling into some *Tony Hawk* spin trick that physically could not occur after a linear collision or you could be treated to a 'you crashed, lol' cutscene

△×□ Car models aren't anything special, but at least every prang leaves a lasting mark on bodywork.

that basically means that you have already lost the race.

The latter is by far the most infuriating, and not even because it's the least funny of the available options. Events are far from easy (especially if you find yourself chasing gold medal scores for some indefensible reason) but all it takes is for some physics mishap to occur and you'll go from first to last in the blink of an eye. And when first place is often the only acceptable outcome to Ubisoft, that one mistake – whether on your part or, more likely, that of the game – is enough to demand a restart. Which means wading through menus, waiting through load times and skipping cutscenes. Yes, cutscenes. Remember when the *TOCA* series decided to go story-based and everyone said it was the best thing that had ever happened to racing games? No? Of course you don't, because that's a bizarre alternate reality apparently only inhabited by the Ivory Tower team. As a result, we get a story (based on revenge, obviously, because Ubisoft), we get horrible characters and we get cutscenes, all of which just further stink up something that was already pretty dirty to begin with.

Despite all this shit-sliding, though, we didn't hate *The Crew*. In fact, it's probably among our most-played mediocre



games of the year (haters, please form an orderly line to make your 'hilarious' *Destiny* jokes here) and for reasons we're not even able to properly articulate, we're still banging our heads against the random unlocks, unfair missions and obtuse structure. It's probably the fact that we like the idea of *The Crew* more than we do the game itself that keeps us playing, and in theory at least, there's a lot to like. The open world is reminiscent of *GTA* (although riffing on US culture and landmarks is sort of Rockstar's thing) and it does genuinely feel quite good to take a car that handles like a breeze block on a skateboard and turn it into something that you can actually throw around corners without swearing.

The fact that you have to put so much effort in just to reach the fundamental baseline of a modern racing game means it's not something for everyone – thrill seekers already have *Need For Speed*, purists can look to the now-working *Driveclub* while the hardcore have *Project Cars* just around the corner. This stiff competition conspires to make *The Crew* feel like exactly what it is, a racer that brings a novel twist on the genre but one that sadly falls short on the most fundamental of levels.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

The ambition of *The Crew* is commendable, but either the concept is fundamentally flawed or the execution is way off. Either way, this is one race you should enter at your own risk.

52%



Lego Batman 3: Beyond Gotham

Like football, it's a game of two halves



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Warner Bros

DEVELOPER
Traveller's Tales

PSN PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-2

INSTALL SIZE
7.4 GB

AGE RATING
7+

TWITTER
@LegoBatmanUK

Trophies 41



FANS OF THE Dark Knight are going to be disappointed with his latest outing. While the Caped Crusader does indeed star in *Beyond Gotham*, he's also something of a Trojan Horse, his name used to springboard gamers into the world of the Green Lantern. We can see why this has happened. After all, everyone and their mum's mum knows who Batman is, but the average performance of the 2011 *Green Lantern* movie suggests that Warner isn't quite confident enough to have its green hero take centre place in his own game just yet.

As a result, Batman eventually steps aside so that Hal Jordan, and The Flash – who has been reinvented by the team as a kleptomaniac idiot – can take centre stage along with a host of other popular heroes, including Wonder Woman, and Superman. Oh, and despite the fact that this is Batman's 75th anniversary, the vast majority of cool looking celebration-based content has been cynically locked

away under a season pass, which is an unwelcome first for the series.

While using *The Avengers* as a springboard for the Marvel universe worked extremely well for last year's *Lego Marvel Super Heroes*, it never seems to gel for *Beyond Gotham*. We're certainly not suggesting it's because Marvel has the better characters (that's an argument for another time) but we will suggest that *Beyond Gotham* feels rushed, as if time

was against the team. It's more obvious after the earlier levels, which are arguably where *Beyond Gotham* excels. The action kicks off when Batman and Robin are chasing a selection of super villains through the sewers of Gotham. The level design here and in the other earlier levels is clever and inventive, mainly because the dynamic duo have to shift between a variety of different suits. One suit lets Batman turn invisible to discover hidden





△○×□ While we don't like the fact he's been turned into a jerk, The Flash can be very useful.



objects, another lets him blow up gold blocks, while later suits enable him to put out fires and store electricity. Robin is just as handy, being able to do anything from walk up walls with his magnet suit or transform into a zorb ball and light up dark areas. It requires you to constantly

some much needed variety. Yes, some of the characters are similar to each other, sharing identical suits, but they are split to ensure that each area feels different.

What a pity, then, that this all falls apart once Batman and his pals reach outer space. A bizarre plot twist continues to

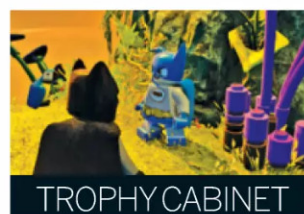
"IT FEELS AS THOUGH THE TEAM SIMPLY COULDN'T KEEP UP THE PACE OF THE EARLY STAGES"

think and you'll come to admire the inventive level design. The story is fun as well, focusing on Brainiac, who is shrinking cities from around the world, causing both heroes and villains to band together.

As more characters get introduced, Traveller's Tales cleverly splits certain stages up so that each one is divided into smaller groups of characters, ensuring you need to understand the skills of each person in the group in order to succeed. It's a great idea, allowing each character to shine and presenting the game with

allow you to play as Batman, but without all his extra suits. As a result the remaining levels become incredibly basic, mimicking the more simplistic gameplay found in the very early Lego games. These levels feel lacking in ideas and creativity, and feel as if the team simply couldn't keep up the pace and variety of the of the early stages. You'll finish the story in under ten hours, and while you'll have a huge amount of studs and gold blocks to still uncover, you won't feel compelled to complete it. In *Lego Marvel*, the hub world was superb, and

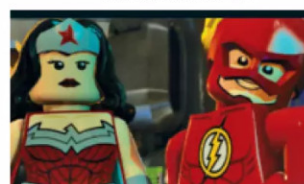
△○×□ It's a real mixed bag visually, looking stunning one minute and dreadful the next. Cutscenes tend to be the worst offenders...



TROPHY CABINET



SAME BAT-TIME SAME BAT-CHANNEL
To complete this, you'll need to find the excellent bonus level. Hint: look in the bat cave for it.



MIRROR... MIRROR!
A relatively easy Trophy for you to unlock. Simply create your very own custom character in order to earn it.

it constantly persuaded you to uncover everything it had to offer. The compulsion here is nowhere near as strong, which is a shame, as the presentation is everything you'd expect from a new-generation game in this series.

While *Beyond Gotham* is nowhere near as disappointing as *The Lord Of The Rings* Lego games, it falls well short of the structured brilliance of *Lego Marvel*. Yes there's plenty to discover outside of the main story, but there's an air of over-familiarity to *Beyond Gotham* that stops it from standing tall with the very best games in the franchise.

Darran Jones

VERDICT

While it does a good job of showing off Batman's past, its haphazard level design and disappointing hub worlds mean that this is a step back compared to *Lego Marvel Super Heroes*.

68%

Lara Croft And The Temple Of Osiris

Hardly belongs in a museum



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Square Enix

DEVELOPER
Crystal Dynamics

PSN PRICE
£14.99

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE RATING
12+

TWITTER
@TombRaider

Trophies 12

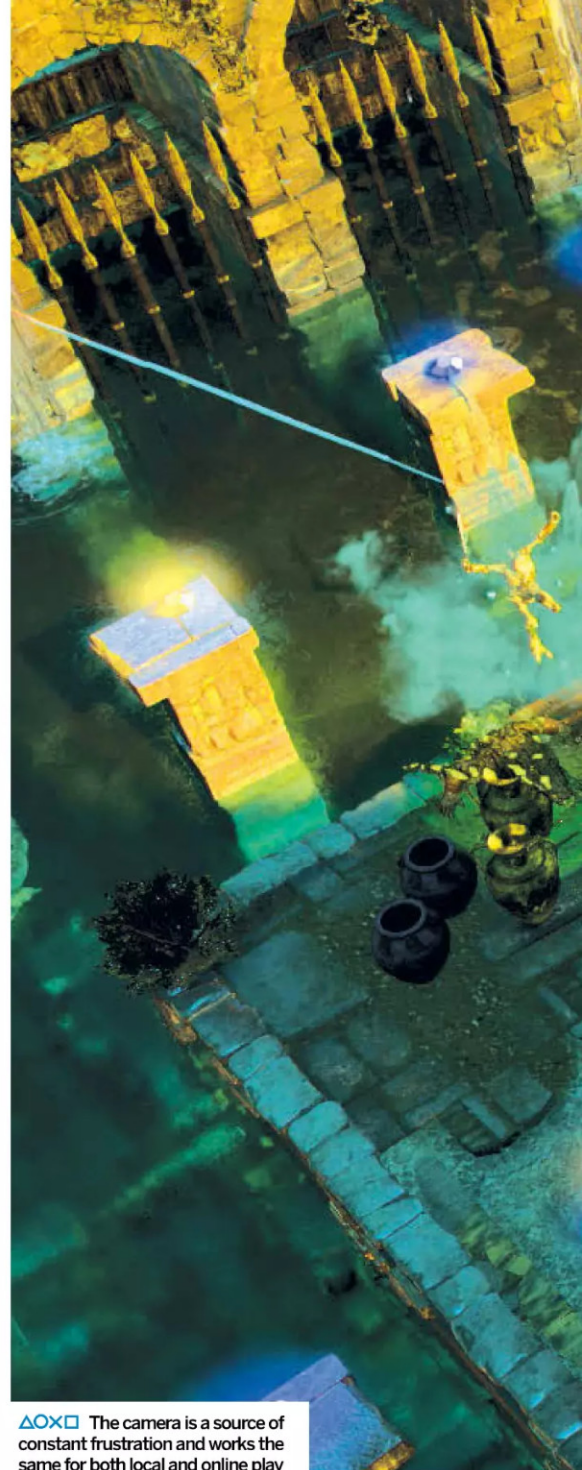


WE'RE GOING TO hit you with a true fact: it's easier to long for something you've lost than it is to be entirely content with what you've got in life. After a decade of throwaway Indiana Jones-inspired antics, you might look at the 2013 reimagining of the *Tomb Raider* franchise as something of a disappointment as it marks the death of Lara Croft as a traditional action hero and the birth of her as a real, personable character. The truth is – and this is something the industry fails to grasp with startling frequency – sometimes we don't *want* character, we just want to shoot dinosaurs with twin-pistols and loot some tombs. Lord knows we can't have both these days. If *Lara Croft And The Temple Of Osiris* does anything spectacularly, it's how expertly it demonstrates the futility in longing for Lara's past adventures.

You see, Crystal Dynamics has revived the classic action hero iteration of Lara Croft for *Temple Of Osiris*. It picks up where 2010's *Lara Croft And The*

Guardian Of Light left off; with a focus on quick co-operative pick-up and play arcade action, precision platforming and plenty of puzzle solving thrown in for good measure. Crystal Dynamics has thrown out character development and narrative for *Temple Of Osiris* – but it's also inadvertently thrown out the fun.

Like its predecessor, *Temple Of Osiris* embraces a top-down isometric view and this is where the problems begin. The fixed perspective makes it troublesome to perform Lara's signature acrobatics and death-defying leaps. This is particularly troublesome as the game demands quick reactions and precision jumps on more than a few occasions through each of the nine main temples. It's an even bigger issue in co-op – which has been bolstered to support four players – where all characters are forced to share a single camera that zooms further and further away from the action to accommodate everybody's movement. It makes it insanely difficult to track of your character in the heat of battle when the camera zooms out fully.



△×□ The camera is a source of constant frustration and works the same for both local and online play

The easy answer then, would be to play solo, right? Sadly, *Temple Of Osiris* is a disappointingly shallow adventure when you're on your own that offers little challenge or incentive to continue playing. In co-op, at least, the temples scale to accommodate the extra characters. Puzzles become more complex and entertaining – which are easily the most enjoyable part of *Temple Of Osiris* – while the enemies become more demanding of player co-ordination and concentration. Really, then, the choice comes down to whether you'd rather wrestle against your wandering attention span or a troublesome camera – it's an impossible decision, and one we rather wish Crystal Dynamics hadn't thrust upon us.

Finicky platforming and enjoyable puzzles are joined by a twin-stick combat system that, while responsive and competent, is simply tedious to interact with. Despite Crystal Dynamics'

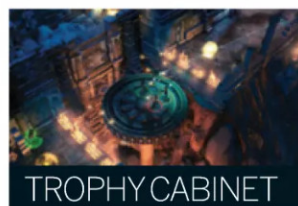




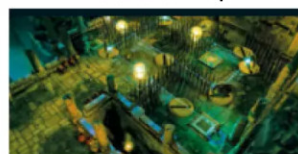
“TEMPLE OF OSIRIS
STRUGGLES TO CAPTIVATE
OR ENTERTAIN, EVEN IN ITS
STRONGEST MOMENTS”



△OX□ While we noticed a few frame rate hiccups, *Temple Of Osiris* is a technically impressive game.



I SHOULD BUY A BOAT
This requires completing one of the better of the nine temples. If you bring friends, beware of the tenacious supernatural enemies that spawn.



TOMB RAIDER
This Gold Trophy is awarded for completing all challenges, which is a pain in the ass. Basically, get your speed runs down or else.

best efforts to hand you a wide variety of weapons – from shotgun, to SMG, to magical staff that shoots rays of mystic death – you’ll never really need to stray from Lara’s iconic twin-pistols. Enemies never present a real threat either; even the bosses can be taken down relatively quickly on a first pass.

Everything you do in *Temple Of Osiris* will also grant you and your companions gems, which can then be spent at various chests for better loot and upgraded items. Not only does this system prove that Lara Croft is the world’s worst archeologist – plundering temples for her own gain – but it’s also a needlessly complex system that fails to justify its place in the game. The upgrades are uninteresting and unnecessary considering the already gentle difficulty curve.

Despite its best efforts, *Temple Of Osiris* struggles to captivate or entertain, even in its strongest moments. It’s a

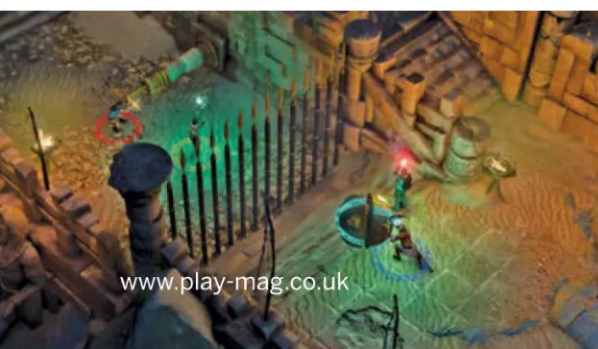
shame because *Lara Croft And The Guardian Of The Light* was such a lovely surprise. This sequel isn’t offensively bad – it’s certainly functional, if not fun in small doses with friends – but it lacks personality. *Temple Of Osiris* might have taken us back to old adventures, but it’s shown us what we’ve always feared: it’s time to move on from Lara’s past. It’s time to embrace the future and desperately hope that Crystal Dynamics hasn’t screwed us over with its *Rise Of The Tomb Raider* timed exclusivity deal.

Josh West

VERDICT

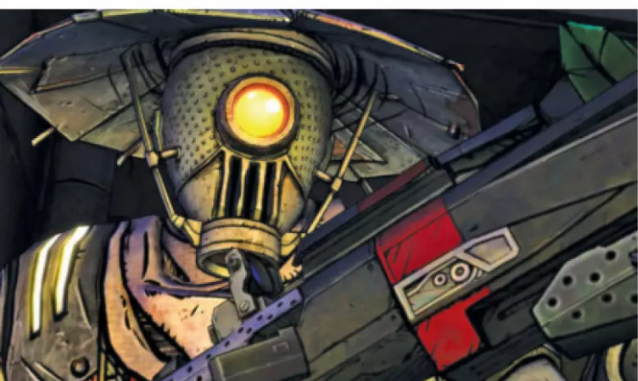
In spite of the frustrating camera and boring combat, *Lara Croft And The Temple Of Osiris* can be fun with friends, though there are certainly better co-op games out there to play.

56%





△○×□ The QTEs actually work this time around! We didn't fail once on our first playthrough, despite it still feeling skilled.



Tales From The Borderlands: Zero Sum

We're not mad, we're just disappointed



THE WORLD OF

Borderlands is rich with story-telling potential, the idea of having

two protagonists with

ALSO ON PS3

intertwining choices is fascinating, and *The Walking Dead* is still one of our favourite games. So twisting these two games up together in some glorious double helix of badassery should be amazing, right? Now, a 70% score is by no means shabby, but this should have been great, and it isn't quite, but for a handful of issues.

We gave *Tales From The Borderlands* two playthroughs: one on instinct, with all the terrifying 'Vaughn will remember that's, and one in stone cold bastard mode, creating two absolute assholes. Thankfully, there are four save slots to mess around with your choices, but playing through twice, it's clear that the appearance of choice just isn't enough any more; Telltale performed that illusion almost flawlessly at the time in *The Walking Dead*, and while

we loved it, enough time has passed that we've seen how the sausage is made. We need something more.

But we're not really talking about the destination, as that's obviously nothing we can judge right now (give it four episodes' time). We're talking about the journey. If we'd have left the game on our regular playthrough, it would have felt fine. Slightly higher score, big love for the story-telling and voice actors, kudos Telltale for your engaging story of two regular(ish) people, trying to scheme their way to greatness in this Vault Hunter-infested world. Sure, in some cases there's clearly a right or expected ways to do things, such as not calling a dirty Pandoran seller of skag kebabs 'Grease Face', but these things need to be included because that's how some people will want to play just to see what would happen. But despite including these bad guy options in the first place, when you actually choose one, it's clear that they don't play out quite so naturally.

Whether you say the dude has a greasy face or not doesn't matter at all; it doesn't cause or stop the scripted events from playing out post-conversation. While we get that the episode obviously has to play out similarly for everyone, it shouldn't be so awkwardly done. If this is your thing, Telltale, then we need to believe it, even if what you're creating is a comedy and therefore you want to give us a few more wacky choices. If we're going to insult the meat guy with a big knife on *Pandora*, we're not expecting to get away from a conversation like that with anything less than that big knife sticking out of our stupid, cocky little face.

DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Telltale Games

DEVELOPER

In-house

PSN PRICE

£3.99

PLAYERS

1

INSTALL SIZE

2.5 GB

AGE RATING

17+

TWITTER

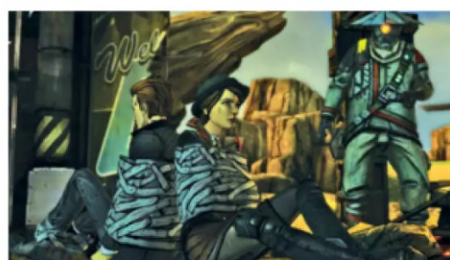
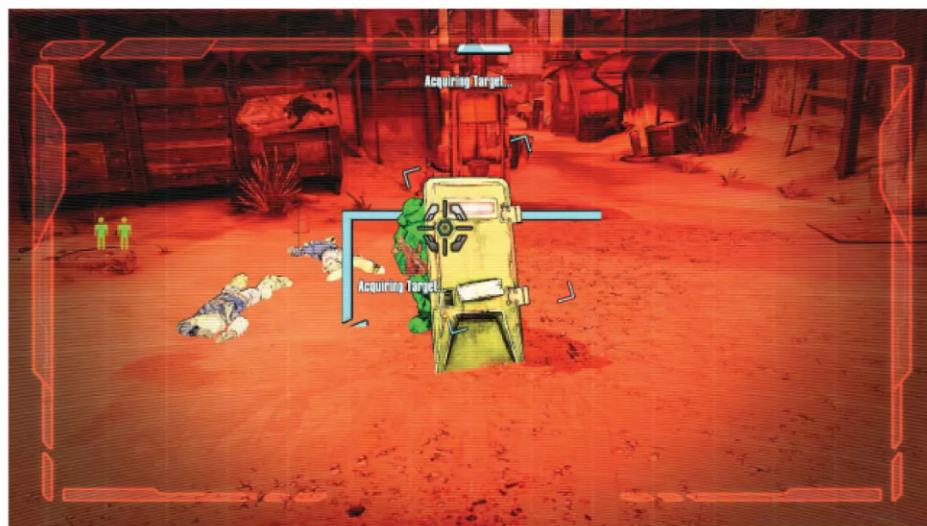
@telltalegames

Trophies

7



0 2 3 2



Look, we love *Borderlands*. And we love what Telltale is trying to do by giving us our own stories to tell within that world. The cinematography of the game is still excellent; Telltale really knows how to capture a moment well and give it a little depth beyond a simple conversation; and the art styles are obviously incredibly complementary, given their cel-shaded loveliness. But things like walking around the world still being a stilted, juddering experience is just so frustrating. Vehicles and people glide over surfaces, fingers go through keyboards when typing, and though some clever set design has been used to hide the invisible walls, there are plenty of 'em. And if anything is going to rip you out of what you're supposed to

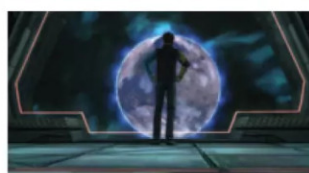
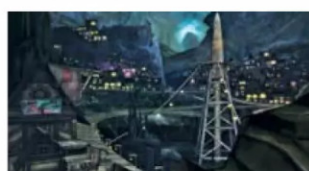
again, the voice acting is absolutely on point, with just the one weak character (with one line that you will cringe at when you hear it) detracting only slightly from the excellent work of the rest of the cast.

Having two main characters does work surprisingly well as well, with Rhys being an average guy with big dreams whilst getting screwed over at work, while Fiona is the wish fulfilment character as a cool con artist. They fit well in *Borderlands'* world, and enhance the previous games by giving you a new perspective on your destructive loot-quest Vault Hunter ways. But at no point during *The Walking Dead* did we roll our eyes at how awkwardly a scene was playing out – our choices seemed to all be accounted for in the way that other characters reacted. We know now that a lot of them weren't, but the illusion was maintained. Maybe it's that Telltale needs to get used to comedy and action while maintaining that pathos, so we're still keen on giving it the benefit of the doubt. But, frustratingly, despite the many positives, there are also a lot of unnecessary flaws here.

Rebecca Richards

"IT'S CLEAR THAT THE ILLUSION OF CHOICE JUST ISN'T ENOUGH ANYMORE"

Still, in the name of comedy, we'll put up with a few little awkward moments. Telltale's games are supposed to be about the relationships you build, and how that can affect the story, right? Well, to be honest, that feels even worse. There's a conversation we had on our 'evil' playthrough between one of our protagonists, Rhys, and a new friend that is ridiculously schizophrenic; if you're being an asshole, the conversation jumps between nasty statements and grumpy reactions to the pre-determined lightheartedness from the bonding you were clearly supposed to be having.



be emotionally invested in, it's watching someone gurn between smiling and angry and scared, often seemingly with the press of a 'CHANGE EMOTIONS NOW' button. Those facial expressions – again, they're fine if you play out the scene in its intended fashion, but not so much if you throw a few curveballs at it, flip-flopping wildly between reactions.

Is *Tales* good at hiding the flimsy weight of your decisions? No, not really. But it does have an engaging story, with the promise of deeper plots and schemes which makes us invested enough to want to know what happens next. And once

VERDICT

Despite some awkward dialogue when you make the 'wrong' choices, stilted movement, and laughably fickle facial expressions, we're still looking forward to the rest of the series.

70%



WWE 2K15

"I'm afraid I've got some bad news..."



ALSO ON PS3

DETAILS

PUBLISHER

2K Sports

DEVELOPER

Visual Concepts/Yuke's

PSN PRICE

£54.99

PLAYERS

1-4

INSTALL SIZE

21.6 GB

AGE RATING

16+

TWITTER

@WWEGames

Trophies 42



WWE 2K15 IS almost as big a letdown as a Wrestlemania card that's topped by The Miz. We knew that 2K could only do so much last year when it jumped in on WWE 2K14 halfway through development after THQ went bust. With a full year at the helm, though, the hope was that some of the WWE games' lingering issues would be addressed and that 2K could inject some of the magic from the NBA 2K franchise into a series that sorely needs revitalising. Unfortunately, that's not really happened.

That's most notably the case in Career mode. For those of you who don't know, the NBA 2K series' much lauded equivalent intersperses its gameplay with cutscenes that let you make choices that affect your relationships and the course of your career. Sounds ideal for a WWE game, right? After all, wrestling is all about stories, so the idea of creating rivalries based on interactions backstage and being given the option to establish your own character as a face or a heel based on how you react to various situations sounds brilliant. Let us give you an example of a cutscene that's indicative

of what you actually get. Early on, presumably pleased with having made it to the WWE, you get a scene in which your character stands backstage and... looks about a bit. That's it. It's completely meaningless and adds nothing to the experience of playing the game. When you do eventually get engaged in rivalries, they feel incredibly hollow and scripted. There's no sense that you can have a significant impact on what's transpiring or that you have any agency in creating your own story.

Things aren't all bad in Career mode, though. The fact that you have to upgrade your character's stats and abilities using points gained from partaking in matches adds some sense of progression. What's interesting about the system is that you gain more points from putting on good matches, which incentivises you to take part in something of a meta-game where pleasing the crowd is just as important as winning. Fortunately, it is far easier to have a good match here than in recent WWE games. Bouts are better paced, partly due to the introduction of a chain wrestling system that replaces standard grapple moves in the early stages of a match, ensuring you can't come straight

out the blocks performing big moves. In addition, the introduction of a stamina bar leads to things slowing down in the latter stages, just as tends to be the case in real WWE matches. We've had a few great contests as a result, complete with last millisecond kickouts, momentum swings and reversed finishers.

Unfortunately, though, 2K15 is still hampered by issues that veterans will be familiar with. That sense that you're controlling a clumsy buffoon rather than a finely tuned athlete? Still there. That thing where you end up swinging punches at thin air when confronted with more than one opponent? Still there. Poor animations and transitions between them? Better, but not what you'd describe as 'good'. The changes made to combat, then, while welcome, are hampered by the fact that they're bolted on to a core that's fundamentally flawed, as it has been for many years. Consequently, those great matches we talked about are the exception rather than the rule.

Moving away from the Career mode, 2K Showcase is the equivalent to last year's 'Road To Wrestlemania' mode, presenting you with two rivalries to play through – John Cena vs CM Punk and



△×□ It's simplistic, but the addition of chain wrestling helps the pacing of matches.

△×□ Some of the facial capture stuff looks great. There are a few wrestlers that look rubbish, however.



Shawn Michaels vs Triple H. Matches are interspersed with real-life footage that tells the story of the two rivalries. Sadly, those fan-pleasing video packages are probably the best thing about the mode. Aside from winning each match, you're given objectives to complete on the way, but the problem is that they're not fun to fulfil. Worse still, we encountered a couple of instances when we performed the action being asked of us, only to have it fail to register.


The changes made to this year's entry in the *WWE 2K* series are for the better. However, those changes either don't go far enough – as in the case of the Career mode – or feel like piecemeal adjustments to systems that are fundamentally flawed.

Paul Walker-Emig


VERDICT

The sense that the *WWE 2K* series is stagnant remains. Despite the fact that this entry does make some genuine improvements, it fails to innovate enough to save the series.

48%



PS3 DIFFERENCES



UNEMPLOYED

Career mode – arguably the best part of the entire game – is not available to those of you who adopt the PS3 iteration of *WWE 2K15*.

UNCANNY VALLEY

The facial and body scanning tech that's been used to more faithfully replicate WWE's wrestlers is only used for the PS4 version.

RING GENERAL

PS3 users will have to settle with the old grapple system, as the new chain wrestling system is a PS4 version exclusive.

Geometry Wars 3: Dimensions

You better shape up



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Activision

DEVELOPER
Lucid Games

PSN PRICE
£13.99

PLAYERS
1-2

AGE RATING
7+

TWITTER
@LucidGamesLtd

Trophies 31



ALSO ON PS3

LEADERBOARDS, EH?

THEY somehow manage to be at once the best and worst part of modern gaming. When they're good, they can connect you with friends you barely see, presenting a way for two people to play against each other online regardless of time zones, sleeping patterns, employment status or any of that rubbish – you set a score, we try and beat it. Simple. But that's also where things turn sour. As much as you might think you can distance yourself from a game, a mode or a score, all it takes is for one cheeky message to come through telling you that you've been dethroned and all human decency goes out of the window.

Not all games achieve this level of social disruption with their leaderboards, sure, but *Geometry Wars* always has, ever since its OG Xbox days. But today, with so many more modes and challenges to try and defend, the life of a *Geometry Wars* trailblazer is a hard one. It used to be that it was just the classic modes that you had to worry about. Now you have Evolved, a classic three-lives twin-

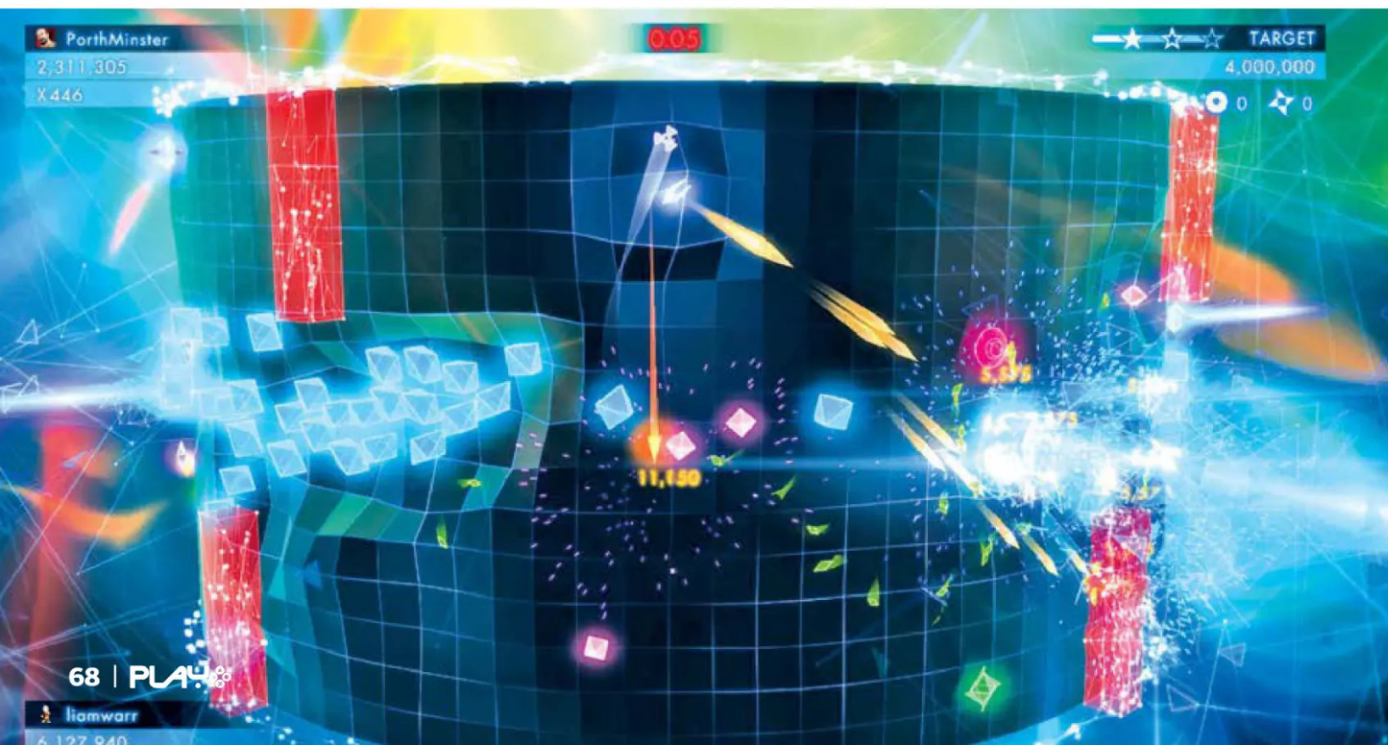
stick affair; Deadline, the same deal but with restrictions on time rather than lives; King, a mode where you can only fire while in a timed safe zone; Waves, perhaps the most self-explanatory mode going (enemies come in waves – do you see?); Pacifism, where your only weapons are the explosive gates that periodically spawn around the thousands of enemies and arguably the single greatest game mode in anything, ever. Only Sequence mode is lost in the jump from 360 to PS4, and that's made up for by Adventure mode – basically a protracted version of the same concept, only with 50 separate leaderboards for you and yours to squabble over.

The key change from previous games (which never actually made it to PlayStation formats) to *Dimensions* is, as the name suggests, the ability for play areas to be more than just simple 2D planes. Adventure mode shows off a number of 3D objects with surfaces just waiting to be coated in bullets and debris, so it's a shame that there's no option to pick your own mode and arena to hunt down your own personal score attack

△×□ Flat and curved levels are fine to navigate, but 3D ones – especially smaller ones – can be a real headache. Enemies can be hiding around any corner.

heaven. Chances are it's already covered by the 50-mission Adventure, to be fair, but the freedom would be welcome all the same. Even the slight curvature of the classic mode's fields is distracting enough for players used to a static 2D view of the already-quite-frantic-enough-thank-you action, so new cylindrical levels, warped arenas and cubic maps are likely to blow minds. On that note, remind us to send an angry email to whoever thought levels with squared edges would be a good idea – barely being able to see what lies in store might be fun in some games, but it really doesn't gel with the precise, score-chasing gameplay here.

Thankfully, cubes are few and new developer Lucid Games (picking up where the now-defunct Bizarre Creations left off) isn't too over-eager with its own new modes, either. There are a few additions introduced over the course of Adventure mode, and they're mostly solid. Titan is effectively Waves: Pass The Parcel Edition, Claustrophobia is regular Evolved gameplay in an ever-shrinking arena, while Checkpoint is a fast-paced



PorthMinster

2,007,900

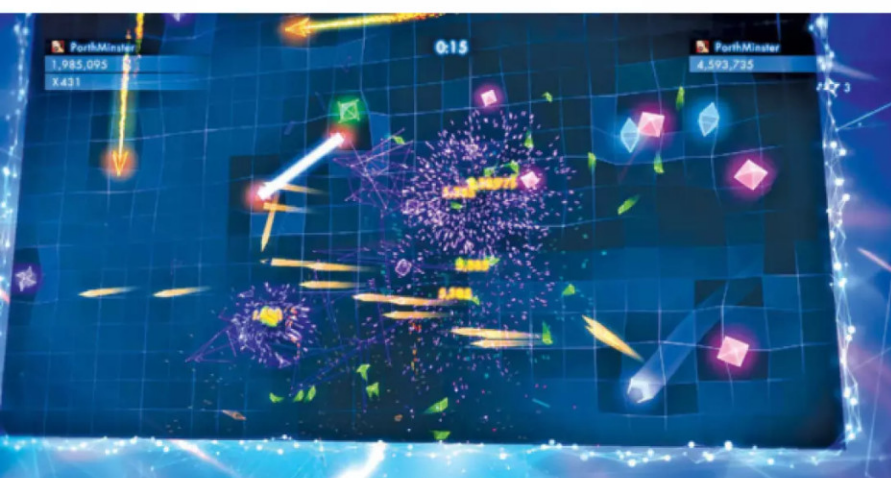
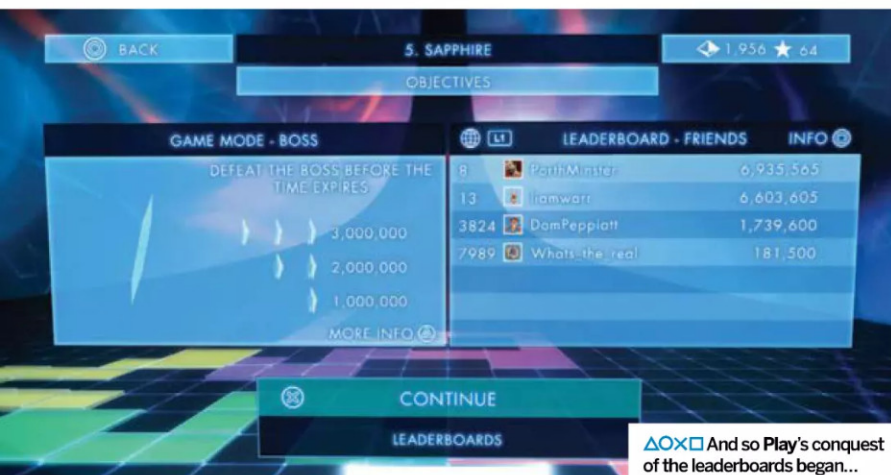
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“NEW CYLINDRICAL LEVELS, WARPED ARENAS AND CUBIC MAPS ARE LIKELY TO BLOW MINDS”



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twist on Deadline. Rainbow is somewhat less effective, tasking you with clearing out the painter enemies before they can fully coat the arena without actually allowing you to see where said enemies are spawning, and Sniper is a clear weak link – surely nobody thought limiting ammo in a game like this was a good idea? Still, it's an idea that the game's online multiplayer component runs with, missing multiple points at once. This isn't a concept that really works in so hectic a game, nor a mode that it even needs. Competition is fierce enough when players aren't even online at the same time and while the push into head-to-head online play is commendable in theory, it's also made entirely redundant by the best and worst thing about this game: leaderboards.

Truth be told, it's a close run thing as to whether Lucid has actually managed to surpass Bizarre's classic shooters or just create something of practically equivalent worth. But given the fact that *Geometry Wars* hasn't been available on PlayStation until now, it doesn't matter

which is closer to the truth – the game is great and there's no other way to play it on a PlayStation system, so *Dimensions* is your only choice. And what a choice it is. Even if it were just the five classic modes (as its forerunner was), this would be an easy recommendation. But with 50 Adventure mode challenges to fight over, online multiplayer and local co-op to ignore because leaderboards are better, and those five timeless play modes that can each devour hours at a time, it should come as little surprise that we wholeheartedly recommend *Dimensions*. Hell, we'd shell out for Pacifism mode alone. It's just that damn good.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

Easily up there with *Resogun* and *Trials Fusion* among PS4's best score attack games, *Dimensions* is the return to form we feared we would never see but are so glad that we have.

92%

"THE STRIKES PROVE
BUNGIE'S FIREFIGHTS
ARE STILL THE BEST
IN THE GENRE"

Destiny: The Dark Below

Your light is stronger than this, Guardians



ALSO ON PS3

DESTINY HAS

PROBABLY been the most divisive game of the year, and Bungie seems to want to make that its newest

IP's thing. The release of *The Dark Below* split a Hellmouth-sized rift in the fledgling community, isolating non-buyers from the game's weekly challenges for a week at launch. It seemed like a punishment from Activision to anyone who was not enjoying its product enough to want to dish out another £20 on a game that is only three months old.

We can't argue the value for money is good in *The Dark Below* – after all, you could pick up the entire *Fallout 3* DLC for less, or even grab the *Dark Souls II* Season Pass. PlayStation owners get three new Crucible maps, two new Strikes, three Story missions and a new Raid to enjoy, as well as a slew of new gear that's instantly better than anything already available in the game.

The Story content is laid out better than anything in the main game, and new vendor Eris replaces Peter Dinklage as your guide through these missions. While the template remains the same (fight off some waves, kill a boss), missions are enhanced by some punchy level design – one epic Hive battle set to Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* is a particular highlight. It's probably the most Bungie thing we've seen in *Destiny* so far, actually.

Both Strikes are great; lengthy enough to feel satisfying, and easy on replayability, too (and that's the most important factor in *Destiny*'s emerging core game). Having two new Strikes in rotation makes the Playlists a bit less predictable – a welcome change after we've spend weeks playing The Devil's Lair and apparently nothing else.

The PlayStation exclusive Strike feels more tacked-on than its non-exclusive sibling – it's basically just a Story mission played backwards with a 'new' boss – but both play like the Greatest Hits of *Destiny*. They take the finest moments from the main game and concentrate

them into two 20-minute romps, proving that Bungie's firefights are still the best in the FPS genre. No matter how many times you play a level (and believe us, we've done each one *a lot*), you'll struggle to find one playthrough like any other: whether you're a lone wolf or rocking up with a full fireteam, every run you undertake is unique. And in a game such as this, that is so important.

Presiding over all of this is Eris Morn, the only (previous) Guardian that went into the Hellmouth and managed to get back out. Eris is a new vendor and quest-giver, offering rolling vanity items and rewarding you with DLC-specific gear.

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Activision

DEVELOPER
Bungie

RELEASE DATE
Out now

PRICE
£19.99
(Expansion Pass: £34.99)

PLAYERS
1-20

INSTALL SIZE
2.44 GB

AGE RATING
16+

TWITTER
@Destiny

Trophies 0



△○× Heading through the bowels of the Cosmodrome, into Rasputin's lair, is easily a highlight of the DLC.



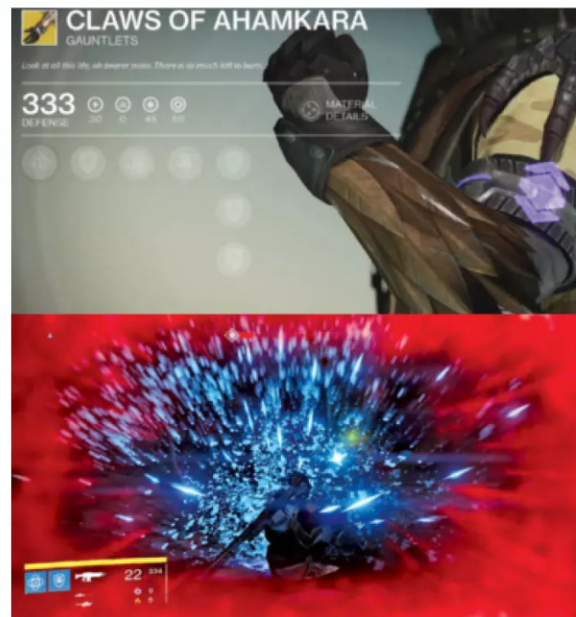
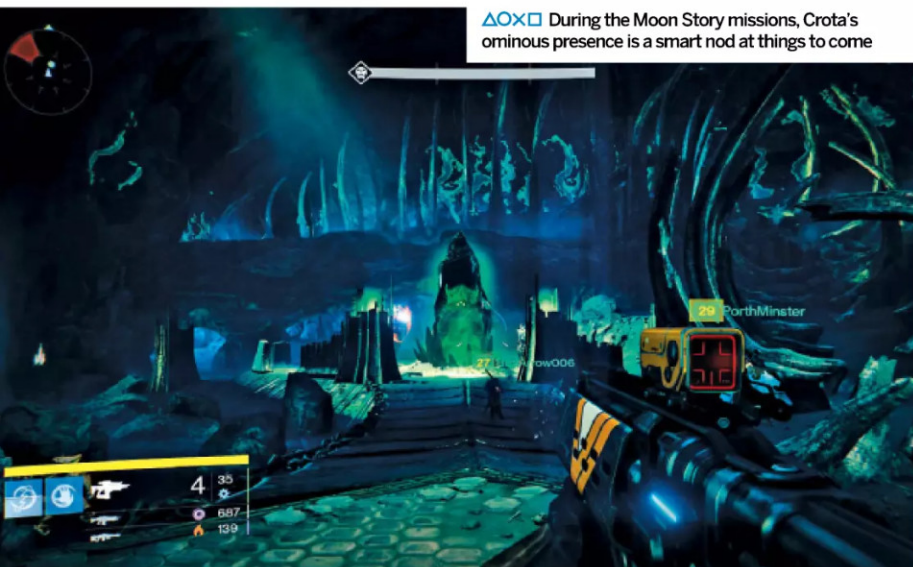


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ΔOX□ The foreshadowing to the Raid is unsettling. Crota just sits there, watching you kill his spawn.



ΔOX□ During the Moon Story missions, Crota's ominous presence is a smart nod at things to come



and team-based action-puzzles that all result in a boss fight that's slow, but solid. Bungie once again proves it's the best in the business with its AI, shifting its focus to the Hive for *The Dark Below* – it shows off a horde mentality that's reactive and smart, rather than just a mass of enemies flinging themselves at you. The studio's clearly learned a valuable lesson after *Halo's* Flood...

In both the Strikes and the Raid, you can see how Bungie has made a game out of *Halo's* skull modifiers – crafting levels that are so malleable, they can feel like totally different experiences when various bonuses or debuffs are applied. It makes replaying the DLC over and over and over again *fun*, although we know it's not for everyone.

And that's why *The Dark Below* is a tricky one to put a score on – it changes how *Destiny* plays, and it almost feels completely necessary if you want to play the game properly – but it does offer some outstanding content that will eventually be phased into *Destiny's* regular rotations. It's a sly move by Activision, but one we can't criticise beyond its value for money.

Dom Peppiatt

VERDICT

Yes, it's expensive and divisive, but at least Bungie has made what content it does offer just as good as the main game... if not better. Sure to have us hooked for the foreseeable future.

72%

THE CRUCIBLE IS NO PLACE FOR MERCY



SKYSHOCK

The worst of the three maps by a significant margin, Skyschock is a sniper's paradise – it's riddled with sheltered vantage points and across-the-map sightlines. If you want to succeed here, bring a good sniper, lots of patience and you must be willing to jump on the map's Pikes wherever you find them.



PANTHEON

Modelled on The Black Garden setting, Pantheon is a level that relies more on verticality than any other map in rotation. Your radar is useless here because it tends to show someone around you, at all times. The perfect free-for-all map – if you pick up heavy ammo when it spawns, you'll easily dominate.

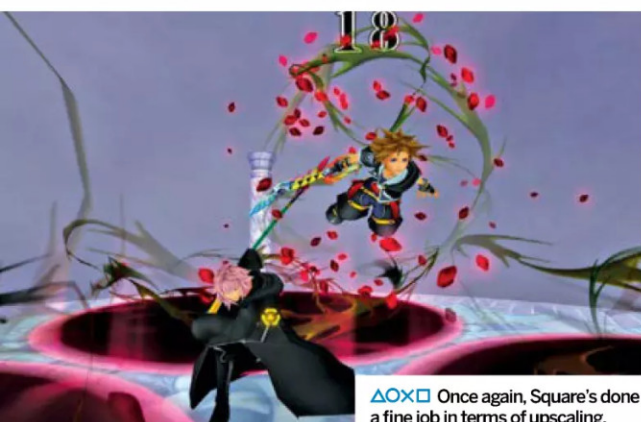


THE CAULDRON

Our favourite map of the set, Cauldron funnels players into a central killzone where there are always a couple of players entrenched, battling for their lives. A haven for grenades and shotguns, The Cauldron feels like an *Unreal Tournament* map, and that's a huge compliment to Bungie's designers.

Kingdom Hearts 2.5 HD ReMIX

Hold your breath, it gets better



△×□ Once again, Square's done a fine job in terms of upscaling.



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Square Enix

DEVELOPER
In-House

PSN PRICE
£29.99

PLAYERS
1

AGE RATING
12+

TWITTER
@KINGDOMHEARTS

Trophies 102



IT'S SAFE TO say that there is no stranger crossover title in all of gaming than *Kingdom*

Hearts. On a fundamental level, it almost feels like the stuff of fan fiction and while it does lean that way during its lowest points, the series' writers generally do a great job of showing the internet amateurs that bringing the Square and Disney universes together isn't simply a case of clumsily describing a scene in which Winnie The Pooh gets off with Tifa. Sure, the core *Kingdom Hearts* narrative might be so confusing as to make the *Metal Gear* timeline seem pretty logical, but it's a code that can be cracked. And even if you don't manage to fill in the many blanks left by the story itself, you still get to dive into some of the most iconic worlds and scenes in animated cinema, which in itself has to count for something.

As before, this remastered collection comprises one console game, one

handheld game and one set of incomprehensible cutscenes that you would never watch through choice if there weren't Trophies tied to doing so, all brought up to modern standards with a slick 1080p upscaling job. The good news, though, is that the first two-thirds of this collection easily outshines the last remaster compilation. *KH2* is categorically a better game than its predecessor, while former PSP title *Birth By Sleep* feels more in keeping with the main series games than the card-based *Re:Chain Of Memories* – yes, there's more of an action emphasis, with ability cooldowns and a trio of playable characters, but that design choice doesn't make it any less relevant or enjoyable on a controller than it did when it first went handheld. In fact, if anything it's actually a better fit for a controller than a portable platform, save perhaps for the oddly close camera angle that feels extremely odd in comparison to *KH2*'s somewhat distant viewpoint.

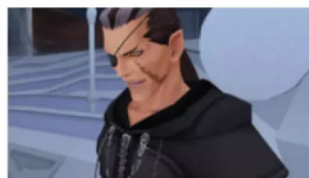


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Kingdom Hearts 2 is undeniably the main attraction here, an epic action-RPG adventure through classic Disney lore that deserves all the love it gets. For the first time, we actually get the *Final Mix* version of the game in English – the Japanese re-release came with a raft of additional content – and it's every bit as in-depth as we had hoped having never played the Japanese release. New content is far more plentiful here than in the original's *Final Mix*, with a whole heap of new end-game boss fights, top-end gear and additional story scenes to enjoy that will really test your mastery of the game's tight combat system. Even nearly a decade on, this aspect of the game remains robust, even though the ass-backwards controls still can't be altered for some arbitrary reason. You'll get used to having jump mapped to Circle and attacks on X, but it's likely to be the cause of frustration during the first few hours due to how much it goes against the grain of the genre.

It's not all good news, however – greatly improved visuals and character models (to the point where certain sections could



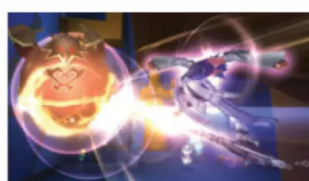
AOX There's a crazy amount of new stuff in the *Final Mix* versions.



AOX The vintage Mickey Mouse world is an absolute treat.



AOX Despite progress in the genre, combat still holds up well.



pass for a brand new PS3 game) come at a cost, with the odd framerate hiccup and, worse yet, brief load times whenever you choose to change Form in combat. It's a fairly minor grievance but given that some of the tougher fights rely on clever switching between Sora's multiple modes, having the game call a timeout every time you switch up your abilities can get a bit frustrating and really does pull you out of the action. There are a few issues from the original that no amount of HD polish can gloss over too, chiefly the tedious slow start to *Kingdom Hearts 2* (before Roxas' tutorial missions finally give way to classic Sora gameplay) and *Birth By Sleep*'s uncomfortably close camera, a hangover from its PSP days that we'd have thought would have been a relatively easy fix.

Aside from these slight annoyances, *2.5 HD ReMIX* certainly doesn't look out of place on PS3. *KH2* holds up slightly better than *BBS* on a technical level but as with the original collection, it's a stellar upscaling job that manages to make the simple and clean design of the game really sing. Sure, it falls down a little in terms of



textures and geometry in some busier areas, but the crisp, colourful look of most of the Disney-themed characters and worlds is simply lovely. We're not sure how much of a compliment it actually is to call it the best-looking PS2 game on PS3, but we're going to go ahead and say it anyway.

Add in a remastered orchestral soundtrack (for *KH2*, at least – *BBS* only gets a partial musical makeover) and a pair of Platins to chase and this compilation of arguably the two best games in the series and one bunch of easy-to-ignore gibberish mobile game cutscenes manages to combine the very best and very worst of the franchise, but the highs make it so easy to ignore the lows. As the definitive versions of both the PS2 classic and the underrated PSP prequel, fans and newcomers alike who can look past the sickly sweetness of Disney's influence and the incomprehensible story are in for a treat.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

A reduced price point for two of the best games from their respective platforms is a no-brainer. Square has done a fantastic job bring these games up to modern standard.

88%



PUBLISHER CAPCOM

DEVELOPER CAPCOM

FORMAT PLAYSTATION

RELEASE DATE 1 AUGUST 1996

PLAY SCORE 95%

METACRITIC SCORE 91/100

The Making Of... RESIDENT EVIL

We speak to Resident Evil creator Shinji Mikami about the genesis of one of the PlayStation's most iconic games, find out how it almost never happened and learn about the shenanigans that went on behind the scenes of the game that reinvented the horror genre on the PlayStation



Few games can make the claim that they defined a genre. Shinji Mikami's zombie-infested take on the haunted house formula, *Resident Evil*, however, did just that. With a remastered version of the PlayStation classic slated for a PS4 and PS3 release any day now, this is the perfect time to look back on the making of *Resident Evil* with the father of survival horror himself.

To refer to Mikami as the progenitor of survival horror and *Resident Evil* might seem like something of a grandiose claim. Indeed, there is a tendency to attribute the success of games to a single figurehead – Ken Levine in the case of *BioShock*, or Hideo Kojima for *MGS*, for example – when in reality there's a whole team of people who contribute to the conception and development of any given title. In the case of *Resident Evil*, though, there's a reason that director Mikami can legitimately claim more credit than most.

"For the first six months of development, I was the 'team,'" Mikami tells us. "Six months down the line, I was joined by another planner, but after three months of working together, he left to do development work on another project." Of course, despite working alone for the initial period, Mikami would eventually end up with a team that would make important contributions to the project, but it was Mikami who was tasked with coming up with the initial concept for *Resident Evil*, or, to give it its Japanese title, *Biohazard*.

"*Biohazard*'s starting point came when my boss at the time, Tokuro Fujiwara [Capcom's general manager], told me to make a horror title using the game system of *Sweet Home*," says Mikami, referring to a title released for Nintendo's Famicom in 1989.

"My first aim was to create something that could provide the scariness of an amusement park's Haunted House, at home," Mikami explains. "For me, the things I've always been scared of the most are ghosts, so I was considering



△×× You can play as either Jill Valentine or Chris Redfield. Jill is effectively easy mode, as she can carry additional items



producing a game full of evil spirits. Thinking about it, though, in the capacity of a game, there wouldn't be any real feeling of exhilaration if you were shooting at, or attacking, ghosts."

This led Mikami to rethink his plans, scrapping the idea of a ghost game and trying to find a new threat with which to confront the player. "I ended up realising that the game's enemies needed to be monsters of some description, as

"I WANTED TO SHOCK THE PLAYERS WITH THE PERFECT TIMING OF EVENTS"

close as possible to humans in form, rather than spirits," Mikami says. "Yes, I thought – zombies! At that time I recalled the film, *Dawn Of The Dead*; I loved that film. It was unfortunate, as far as the audience was concerned, that the characters couldn't survive; but with a game, the players could use their own techniques and thinking in order to survive the experience," Mikami continues. "I thought that

this difference between horror games and horror movies could be something wonderful. That was the moment when I conceived *Biohazard*."

It's fitting that Mikami describes *Resident Evil* as being a game that you 'survive', because it is that sense that you're at threat, that you are vulnerable, that makes the game so terrifying. Ammo is limited, so every encounter with a

zombie has an extra layer of tension, knowing as you do that you've got to avoid wasting valuable bullets. In fact, much of the anxiety the game creates lies in anticipation of conflict, as you fret about whether you've got the resources you

need to survive your next battle, or wring your hands over whether now is the time to use one of your limited saves.

Speaking to Mikami, it's clear that generating that sense of unease in the player was deliberate. "I wanted to shock players with the perfect timing of events, while also having strong control over the player's mentality, so that the fear factor would become self-reinforcing thereafter," Mikami

BLUFFER'S GUIDE

Everything you need to know in five facts



1 The original version had a notoriously bad FMV sequence and equally bad voice acting.



2 The series includes mild puzzle elements, in amongst all the zombie shooting.



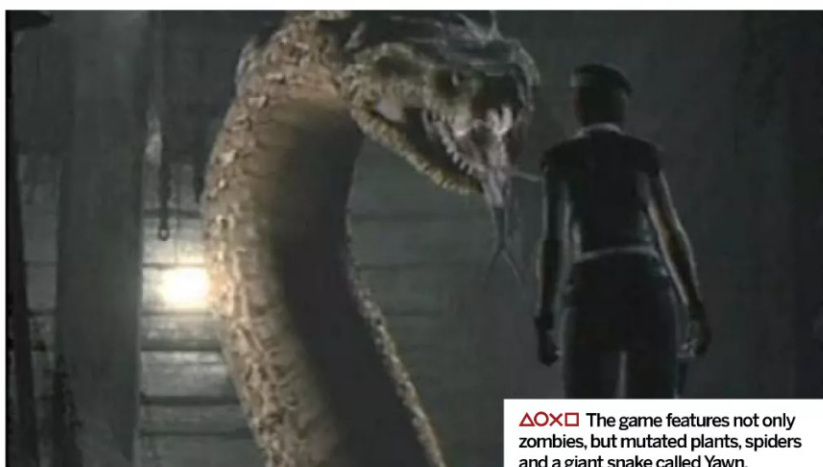
3 Some of the games have a number of different endings dependent on your actions.



4 You play as one of two members of an elite task force called the S.T.A.R.S. team.



5 The series has six mainline sequels (so far) and a number of spin-off games.



△OX□ The game features not only zombies, but mutated plants, spiders and a giant snake called Yawn.



△OX□ The prettified HD version of *Resident Evil* for PS4 looks great, but we miss the old voices.

FURTHER READING



OLDER – SWEET HOME

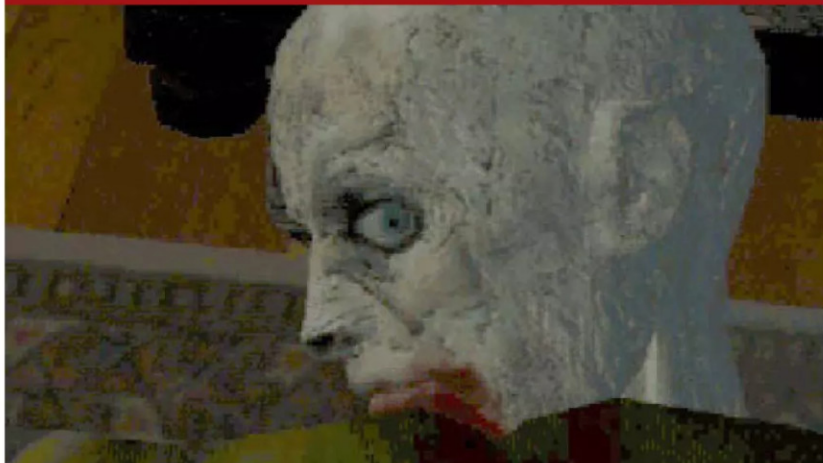
The idea of *Resident Evil* started when Mikami was told to make a game using the systems of *Sweet Home*, a horror game for the Famicom which was itself based on a Japanese horror film of the same name.



NEWER – THE EVIL WITHIN

Mikami's latest outing into the world of videogaming is a game very much in the survival horror mould that he established with *Resident Evil*. In many ways, it feels like a 'greatest hits' of the entire genre.

STANDOUT MOMENT



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

A truly terrifying introduction

Few scenes are seared into our minds in the way that the first encounter with a zombie in *Resident Evil* is. The oddly haunting door animation that confronts you whenever you move into a new area sets the tone. You then find yourself facing one of *Resident Evil*'s trademark blind corners. Turning

the corner triggers a cutscene in which you see the back of kneeling figure. He appears to bite down on a corpse and a pool of blood appears. Finally, we cut to a close-up as the figure slowly turns its head towards you, revealing the grey, blood stained face of the series' very first zombie.

explains. "We used features such as the zombies' moans and their footsteps as omens throughout the flow of the game. Even if you knew before looking round a corner that a zombie was going to be there, we set up blind spots so players wouldn't see the zombies and that in turn produced an uneasy feeling that caused players to feel afraid."

It's interesting that elements that you just wouldn't find in modern games were a vital part of what make *Resident Evil* scary, such as the camera angles that Mikami mentions. Fixed cameras are a rarity nowadays and even when they are in place, having them be deliberately claustrophobic and placing them in such a way as to obscure the player's view would be a no-no. Yet, constantly forcing the player to venture into the unknown, placing them in a position where every corner invited you to imagine what might be beyond, was a key facet in creating tension in the game.

The same goes for *Resident Evil*'s controls. By modern standards, they are incredibly cumbersome and limiting – not only is turning your character around equivalent to parallel parking an articulated lorry, the game doesn't allow you to move

and shoot at the same time. But again, these restrictions added to the tension. Being unable to move swiftly throughout the mansion in which *Resident Evil* was set made you feel more vulnerable and transformed encounters where you were gradually closed down by zombies as you stood rooted to the spot, popping off shots, into an often terrifying experience.

When Mikami talks about 'timing events', though, it's impossible not to think of moments that punctuate the general sense of fear that pervades *Resident Evil*. The moment when a pack of rabid zombie dogs clatter through the glass window of a corridor, scaring all of us out of our skin on our first run through springs to mind, as does the first-person Hunter introduction. Those interjections kept you on your toes – anything could be around the next corner.

We almost didn't get any of those iconic moments, however. "During the development phase, I felt that the project wasn't being appreciated at all," Mikami says and, evidently, he was correct. "Capcom's consulting company at the time made a report that included a comment written like this: 'Discontinue *Biohazard* project.' I went mad!," exclaims Mikami.



HORROR DYNASTY

How Resident Evil became a franchise

"Once the first game was finished," Mikami says, "Capcom told me immediately to make a sequel. Only, I was told to redefine my role for *Biohazard 2* as a producer, and at the time that really made me feel down." Things didn't turn out badly in the end, though, as Mikami's friend Hideki Kamiya took the reigns and churned out another classic in the form of *Resident Evil 2*. Mikami would return to direct the series and create yet another classic in the form of *Resident Evil 4*, a game that's generally credited with redefining the action genre.

"After seeing that, it just made me feel strongly that I would complete *Biohazard*, no matter what," Mikami explains that it was the man who originally tasked him with making the game who intervened to stop *Resident Evil* being cancelled. "It was Fujiwara who called for Capcom to let us continue with the *Biohazard* project. I only heard from Fujiwara himself roughly ten years after *Biohazard* was finished that he'd intervened in such a way, but it apparently saved the project"

Perhaps part of the reason *Resident Evil* came close to cancellation is that it was a project that saw a high turnover of staff. "I remember how, because developing

but we had to give up on that idea and modify *Biohazard* to use pre-rendering: if we hadn't done that, it would have been impossible to properly realise my plans for the game."

Capcom's unease about the game was probably exacerbated by the fact that the development team working on it were incredibly inexperienced, hence the difficult production process Mikami describes. "Except for myself, most of the staff on the *Biohazard* team [were] newcomers to Capcom," Mikami reflects. "The team generally wasn't very experienced at all, and it meant we had to go through a lot of trial-and-error

"WE USED FEATURES SUCH AS THE ZOMBIES' MOANS AND FOOTSTEPS AS OMENS THROUGHOUT THE GAME"

Biohazard was too difficult for them, one by one staff would resign from the job," Mikami tells us. "I think everyone felt like they didn't know what was what. It was a feverish atmosphere in the development team."

"It was incredibly difficult to produce the game for the PlayStation hardware back then," Mikami recalls. "Initially it was intended to be a full 3D production,

during the development process. In spite of that, the team had an incredibly positive attitude, and I'm sure that contributed to how we were able to produce such a good game."

It's a good job the team had a positive attitude, because it sounds as if that was tested towards the end of development, with the team working insane hours to get



Resident Evil finished. "The final stage of development lasted around six months," Mikami tells us. "During that time, the team were mostly living at work. It was a case of 'super hard work' until 3am every night. At the time, everyone was considered equal, and once it got to be past midnight in the studio, our spirits became really high. People would be running around the development floor... We'd group together in pairs and push other development staff, who were sitting on chairs [with wheels], into the elevator, then press the button to send them to whichever floor we wanted them to go to, and shout 'Sayonara!' We had all these funny customs," he laughs.

To the surprise of Capcom, *Resident Evil* turned out to be a huge success, selling twice the number of copies that the publisher had anticipated. The game which was almost cancelled ended up revitalising a company that was on the verge of going bust, spawned a series that's still going strong and will go down in history as one of the most revered games of all time.

"Honestly, I was surprised by how successful it was. It was just a happy accident that the PlayStation market and the saleability of *Biohazard* matched so perfectly," says Mikami, modestly. "I think we were very lucky."

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INTERVIEW

BREAKING INTO SONG

Award-winning composer Winifred Phillips has won yet another one for her work on *LittleBigPlanet 3* – so how does she do it?

So how did you get into this side of the videogame industry?

I'd been working as a composer for a National Public Radio series for a number of years before the idea occurred to me that I could write music for games. After reading news articles about game projects in development, I started sending out introductory emails in the hopes of catching the eye of a music supervisor willing to take a chance on a composer with no game credits. It took two years before these efforts led to my first big break.

I spent those two years creating music for a bunch of small games that never saw the light of day, and while those games helped me gain experience and develop a music portfolio, it was also an exercise in frustration. Nevertheless, I kept trying and eventually my music caught the attention of a music supervisor at Sony Computer Entertainment America, and I was brought on to join the music composition team for *God Of War*.

What is your creative process?

That will depend on what kind of game it is, and

also what kind of music I'm currently composing. The music I composed for *Assassin's Creed III: Liberation* was strongly influenced by the heritage of the main character, Aveline, and the rich culture of the historical setting in which she lived. Those were my driving influences when I was composing that music. Those sorts of considerations change from project to project.

For *The Da Vinci Code* game from 2K Games, I focused on the beauty and solemnity of the churches in which a lot of the action took place, so I began many of the tracks with an underlying structure reminiscent of sacred music and then I built in some contemporary edginess to help maintain the momentum of the storyline. For *Speed Racer* from Warner Bros. Interactive, my composition process started with the core elements of techno and EDM, because there's such a long tradition of those music genres in futuristic racing games, and then I branched out into jazz and funk influences to give the whole thing a sense of humour and an eclectic, mashup-inspired feel. Every game is different.

So you're a gamer yourself?

I love videogames! I think that playing games from an early age has helped me to maintain my enthusiasm for this career through the tough early years. It has also helped me to transition into the technically demanding discipline of game music composition. Playing games can definitely help a composer to understand what musical interactivity is, and how to approach creating music that can change and adapt as the game progresses.

How much direction do you usually get from the game's developers?

Some development teams want to be deeply involved in the musical decision-making processes right from the very start – it's a philosophy that drives every aspect of their work. They approach everything with a very collaborative mind-set. Other teams are cautious about influencing my creative process, and prefer to let me take the lead. Either way, I really depend on communication with the team, because I'm always aware that my

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goal is to create music that reflects their artistic goals for their game.

When creating a piece of music, how do you find the balance between it being memorable and complementing the game?

Some gameplay situations really require a subtle musical score that communicates emotions and atmosphere without becoming particularly melodic. Other game moments can become incredibly stirring and powerful with the introduction of a melodic theme. The trick is in differentiating the two circumstances, and including melodies when they will enhance gameplay. Sometimes the development team will ask the composer to create a memorable tune for a specific purpose in a game – such as when the *God Of War* team asked me to create the 'Siren's song' melody for the Desert Of Lost Souls level. Other times, I will compose a melody for repeated use in various gameplay situations – such as the 'hero' melody that I created as the main theme for Electronic Arts' *Spore Hero*,

which recurred throughout the game in both subtle and overt ways.

What are some of the problems you can face when composing?

Most of the time, when we're composing interactive game music, we're not thinking about beginnings, middles and ends. We're thinking about music that's organised into lots of flexible bits and pieces that can be juggled around, combined and recombined at any given time depending on the actions of the player and the conditions of play. Nothing in our traditional education prepares us for this, and that's a huge hurdle to overcome... not to mention the difficulty in adjusting to the different roles that music can play within a game.

In regards to the award-winning *Ziggurat Theme* from *LittleBigPlanet 3*, what do you feel it was about this track that made it stand out?

The *Ziggurat Theme* is a classical fugue from start to finish, performed by 18 voices. With that in

mind, the music would have felt very serious and baroque if it weren't for the fact that the voices are singing nonsense syllables. It's a musically intricate track with multiple personalities, and I really enjoyed composing it. Winning the Hollywood Music in Media Award for the *Ziggurat Theme* was unexpected and very exciting!

Finally, what advice do you have for anyone looking to get into this side of the industry?

It's important for us to love music passionately and want to spend our lives creating it. We also need to be excited about videogames and the creative possibilities that they provide us. I think what all that aspiring videogame composers really need to do is focus on their craft, and pursue their first big break into the industry. It can take time for the first break to materialise. For me, it took years, but patience and perseverance saw me through.

Winifred Phillips is the author of *A Composer's Guide to Game Music* (The MIT Press 2014). You can contact her on Twitter at @winphillips

EXTENDED PLAY

METRO

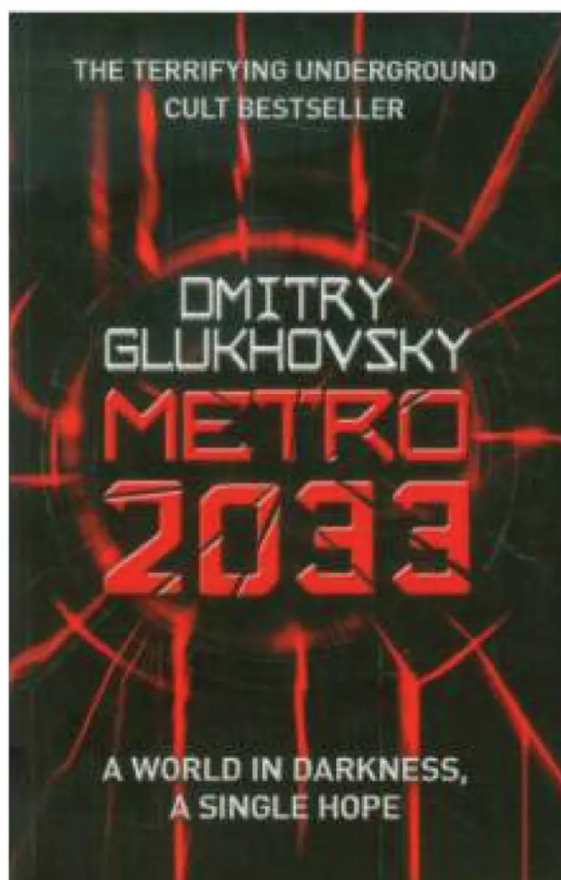
They may not be as high profile as the likes of Call Of Duty and Battlefield, but the Metro games have a cult following who vow the games' bleak atmosphere and hints of survival and stealth elements make it a series worth returning to...



REDUX

■ **WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING** to experience *Metro 2033* and *Metro: Last Light* for a second time, or if you're looking for an entry point into the series, *Metro Redux* – a definitive version of those two games in one package for PS4 – is an excellent option. The *Metro* games have a reputation for impressive visuals on PC that couldn't be matched by the PS3 – *Redux* on PS4 brings *2033* and *Last Light* up to that level, boosting the resolution to 1080p, improving assets and ramping the framerate up to 60fps.

One of the cool things about *Redux*, though, is that it's not just about the visuals. *2033* was criticised for its control system and interface, with developer 4A making substantial improvements to both elements in *Last Light*. In *Redux*, those improvements have been retrofitted to *2033* in a welcome move to improve the experience of the original game. An excellent excuse to give *2033* and *Last Light* another shot, then, if only to marvel at how the PS4 shows off the two games' visual splendour.



THE NOVEL

■ **IN CASE YOU** didn't already know, the *Metro* games are based on a novel that shares the name of the first game, *Metro 2033*, written by a Russian author named Dmitry Glukhovsky. If you've been taken in by the fiction and world-building of the *Metro* games, the novel provides you with a means to further immerse yourself in the *Metro* universe and perhaps even gain a slightly different perspective on the events and characters you're familiar with from the game. Reading the novel may even inspire you to play through again with the added benefit of your expanded knowledge about the world of *Metro*.



MULTIPLE ENDINGS

■ **THE SOMEWHAT INTIMIDATING** Hardcore run isn't the only reason to give the *Metro* games a second playthrough – there's also the fact that both games have two endings. Naturally, we'll avoid any spoilers as that would defeat the purpose of you playing them again, save

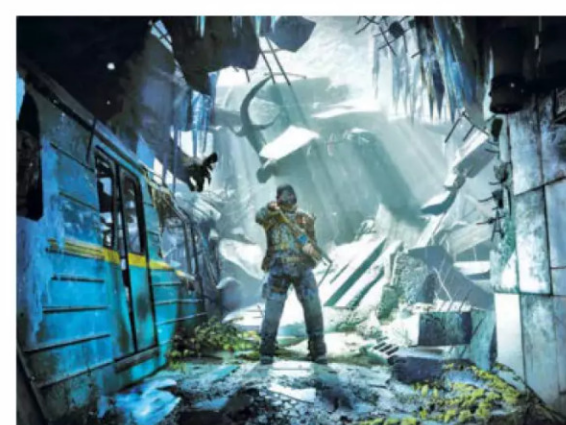
to say that the choices you make throughout the games can impact on the ending. If you make enough positive choices then you'll get the 'good' ending, though it's worth pointing out that *Metro 2033*'s 'bad' ending is the canonical one that's carried over into *Last Light*.



DLC

■ **IF YOU'VE GRABBED** *Metro Redux*, then you'll have the DLC for *Last Light* already included. For those of you playing on PS3, though, the game's DLC is one way of getting a little bit extra from *Last Light*. As well as the challenge based Tower Pack, there are a couple of story-focused download packs for you to get your teeth

into. Instead of playing as the main game's protagonist, Artyom, the Chronicles Pack sees you take on the roles of Anna, Khan and Pavel in their three respective levels. Then there is the Faction Pack which has three missions which focus on different aspects of *Last Light*'s gameplay, these being shooting, stalking and sniping.



RANGER HARDCORE MODE

■ **IF YOU'RE SOMEONE** who really likes a challenge, you might want to try a run on either *Metro 2033* or *Last Light* on the Ranger Hardcore difficulty mode (included as part of *Metro Redux* or as DLC for the original PS3 versions). Both you and your enemies will drop incredibly quickly due to increased damage, so you'll have to employ stealth if you want to be successful. The same goes when it comes to resources – ammo is far harder to come by in Ranger mode, making a stealth approach doubly advisable. Oh, and there's no HUD.

20 YEARS OF

PLAYSTATION

Two decades ago, Sony was the console market's latest upstart – today, it's a dominant power. We look back at how the PlayStation became the biggest brand in gaming



Read the full story of the PlayStation legacy in Retro Gamer 137, on sale now.
www.greatdigitalmags.co.uk



■ **WHEN THE PLAYSTATION** arrived on these shores in September 1995, it was accompanied by a simple marketing message: "Do not underestimate the power of PlayStation."

Sony's first entry into the console market was a strange paradox – backed by a large corporation with deeper pockets than its competition, it was nevertheless considered something of an underdog prior to its release as Sega and Nintendo had seen off competition from a variety of challengers over the preceding years. However, Sony's warning was justified: when the PlayStation arrived in Japan on 3

December 1994, a stunning conversion of Namco's arcade hit *Ridge Racer* proved the power of the new hardware. Fast-forward just over a year to the end of 1995, and acclaimed titles such as *Twisted Metal* and *Tekken* had joined its roster.

However, it was *WipEout* that best showcased Sony's plans for its console. The rock-hard futuristic racer included licensed music from The Chemical Brothers, Orbital and Leftfield, dance acts that were all popular in nightclubs at the time – and it was the clubbers that Sony was courting. While Sega had broadened the age group of gamers by

targeting older teens, Sony was aiming higher, putting consoles into the hands of people that hadn't been targeted before to build mainstream relevance. PlayStations were installed into the Ministry Of Sound's chillout room, and shown off to influential non-gaming magazines like *The Face*. The PlayStation was a games console, but it was *cool*.

Of course, all the great marketing in the world wouldn't have worked if the PlayStation couldn't deliver where it mattered, but that was never a problem. *Resident Evil*'s arrival in 1996 redefined horror in videogames, providing a game that

GAMES THAT DEFINED THE PLAYSTATION

The software upon which an empire was built



RIDGE RACER - 1994

First impressions count, and it's hard to make a better first impression than this. Namco's racer was one of the biggest titles in the arcade, and this home version was incredible.



WIPEOUT - 1995

Ridge Racer sold the console to gamers, but *Wipeout* gave it mass appeal. Licensed music and astounding visuals let people know that consoles were no longer child's play.

catered perfectly to the expanding adult market, and in the same year *Crash Bandicoot* showed that there was also room for family-friendly platformers. *Tomb Raider*, the most impressive 3D adventure of the time, might have arrived slightly earlier on Sega's Saturn, but it was the PlayStation version that grabbed the world's attention – and Sony that

“100 MILLION PLAYSTATION CONSOLES WERE SHIPPED OVER ITS LIFETIME”

signed an exclusivity deal for the sequels.

Over the next few years, the key to the success of the PlayStation was created – a line-up that offered something to please every type of gamer. For the hardcore that didn't care about the latest 3D visuals as much as great gameplay, the PlayStation had the likes of *Castlevania: Symphony Of The Night* and the *Street Fighter Alpha* games. For those who wanted brand new types of game, there was *PaRappa The Rapper* and *Fluid*. Epic, cinematic experiences arrived in the form of *Final Fantasy VII* and *Metal Gear Solid*, showing the direction gaming would take over the coming years, and *Gran Turismo* – the best-

selling game on the console – further showcased the shift away from arcade sensibilities.

Over 100 million PlayStation consoles were shipped over its lifetime, making it the best-selling console ever made at the time. For perspective, that's the supposed underdog selling more units than all of Sega's consoles put together. Needless

to say, anticipation for the PlayStation 2 was high and the console came roaring out of the gates. The PS2 launch line-up wasn't the most inspiring, with *SSX*

and *TimeSplitters* providing early highlights, but the console quickly delivered more of what players wanted, with sequels in popular series such as *Gran Turismo*, *Final Fantasy* and *Tekken*.

Much of the PS2's success can be put down to its family-friendly appeal. The likes of the *EyeToy*, *Buzz* and *SingStar* were big with the casual audience, but the biggest driver of sales was a non-gaming feature – the inclusion of DVD playback, bringing the machine into even more living rooms. Combined with Sony's growing strength in first-party titles, exemplified by titles such as *Jak & Daxter* and *Ico*, the console became the most successful of all time with over 155 million units sold.

Sony was in an good position thanks to the success of the PlayStation and PlayStation 2, and decided to venture into the handheld market with the PlayStation Portable in 2004 – a bold move, given Nintendo's history of domination within that market. It proved to be the first time that Sony didn't win a console race, as Nintendo's handheld managed to ride the wave of casual hits such as *Nintendogs* and *Brain Training* to enormous success. However, the PSP was far from being a failure, with a strong library of games including great titles such as *LocoRoco* and *Patapon* as well as handheld versions of major series including *God Of War: Chains Of Olympus*, *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories* and *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker*. Special praise is reserved for the *Monster Hunter* series, which led to a multiplayer-driven Japanese sales surge in the portable machine's later life.



✕✕✕✕ The PlayStation offered games for everyone, from arcade fighters to cinematic blockbusters.



The PlayStation 3 was marketed as a multimedia behemoth in 2006, but it also represented the first time Sony had faced strong competition in the home console market, being outflanked on release date by Microsoft's Xbox 360 and in the family market by Nintendo's Wii. The PlayStation 3 hasn't achieved the same success as its forebears as a result, though its sales have still reached the 80 million mark. While the journey has been rocky, the PS3 years has seen Sony re-align its strategy around to providing the very best software titles, introducing series such as *Motorstorm* and *Uncharted* while increasing the profile of titles made famous in the last generation like *Killzone*, *God Of War* and *Metal Gear Solid* arguably giving the console the best software line-up of its generation.

And this is where we come back to marketing slogans. “This is for the players” is Sony's current sales line and looking to the future of the platform, from triple-A titles on PlayStation 4 to the wealth of excellent indie releases on the Vita, it's clear that this is another PlayStation slogan to pay attention to and is a mantra that Sony is firmly adhering to.



PARAPPA THE RAPPER - 1996

Music games owe a lot to our favourite paper-thin rapping dog, whose game stands as an icon of the inventive releases that have always had a home on PlayStation platforms.



GRAN TURISMO - 1997

The talk before the PlayStation's launch was that Sony's development capabilities were weak. *Gran Turismo* proved the naysayers wrong, becoming the best-selling game on the console.



FINAL FANTASY VII - 1997

The PlayStation went beyond arcade experiences, offering games with cinematic overtones. Squaresoft's epic exemplified this new type of game, and kicked off an RPG boom.

BEST LEVELS

LITTLEBIGPLANET 3

The community has always helped make LittleBigPlanet stand out. Here are some of the best levels created in the latest game so far...



STEAMED 2

■ **WE'D SEEN** A good deal of these survive-for-as-long-as-you-can sort of levels in *LittleBigPlanet 2*, but it's amazing what the addition of extra layers has brought to the table. Things start off slow but quickly pick up as the platforms blast out of the furnace. The creator has made fantastic use of those additional layers for Create mode and despite the challenge it poses, it works smoothly and incredibly well. Plus it's supremely designed, too, among the best of the bunch so far and looks gorgeous with the central pillars of flame threatening to set poor Sackchap aflame. Certainly one worth favouriting and coming back to time and again, this one.

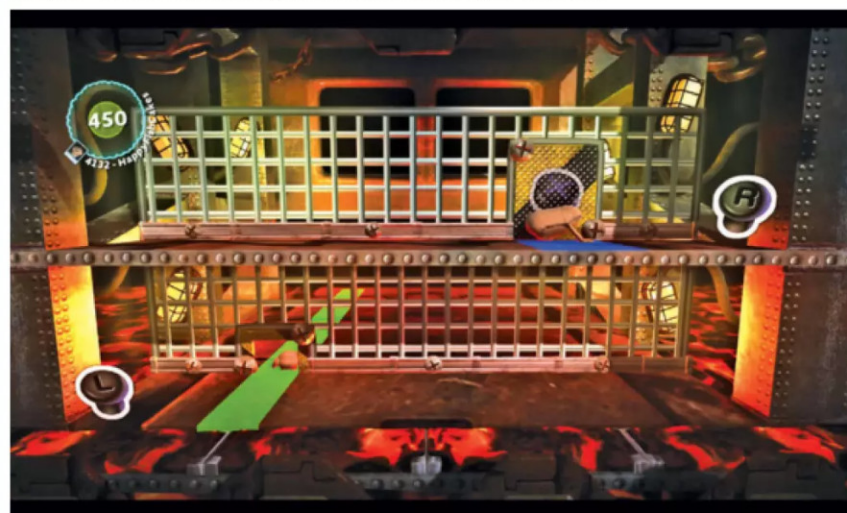


SPINNING WHEEL

■ **AS A MULTIPLAYER** stage, this requires some friends to make the most of it, but it's a great idea all the same. With only two actions – jump or hit – you can choose to either leap over the rotating stick or repel it back, increasing its speed in the process. You've probably figured the catch by now, but fail at either and you're in the sink. It's the same kind of simple yet compelling multiplayer mind games that makes the likes of *Towerfall* and *Nidhogg* work so well – except that this one is made entirely in *LBP*. Recommended if you've got friends who play too.

BURN BOX

■ **THIS IS GREAT** for two reasons. Firstly, it twists Toggle's unique size-altering mechanic a little. And second, it's a clever iteration of the randomised into-the-screen kind of level we've seen a bunch of times. Here you need to control big Toggle and little Toggle independently of each other with each of the analogue sticks. The catch is randomly appearing walls that require you to move into place, sometimes toggling size to allow little and large to fit through specified gaps. It's proof that there's the innovation yet to be discovered in *LittleBigPlanet* – especially with the new features – and it's so well designed in fact, it deserves your attention.

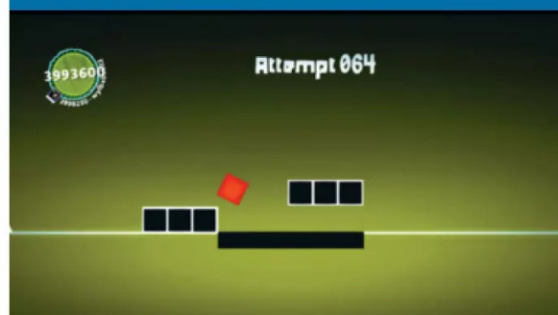


CURSORY COPPICE

■ **WEE LITTLE ODDSOCK** is perhaps our favourite addition to *LittleBigPlanet 3*, if only because of his nimble speed allowing for some thrilling, skill-focused race levels. Such as this one. There are a handful of Oddsock platform stages already created, but none are as well-produced as this. It's entirely a race and is designed to give you a desire to want to retry and beat your time and your score. It's as good as any equivalent level in Adventure mode with Oddsock, with all the moving parts and detailed decoration that makes the very best creator levels stand out.

THE IMPOSSIBLE GAME

■ **YOU MAY SORT** of have played this level already, what with it being an almost exact copy of the free Flash game of the same name. It's not quite as robust perhaps, and not actually as long as the real thing, but it does have two stages and is – mechanically, at least – presented in a fashion that will be hard not to be impressed by. It's a great showcase for the ways the Create tools can be adapted to not rely on a playable Sackboy (or his new friends) and instead make something all your own – even if, technically, this isn't.



SAVE MOTHERSHIP ALPHA

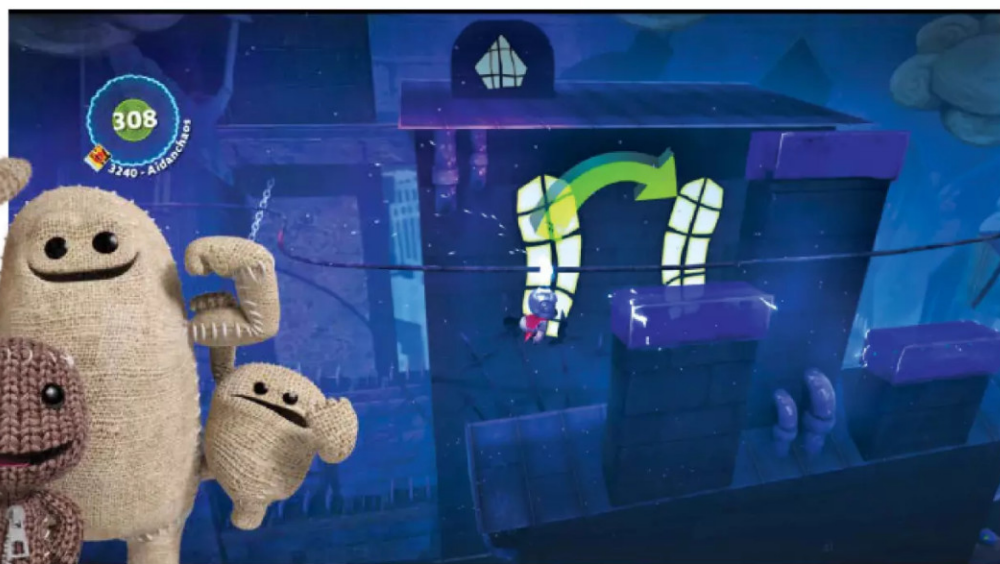
■ **2D SHOOTERS WERE** all the rage back in *LBP2*'s earlier days, but dropped off as people tried to do more imaginative things with the tools. Thanks to the threequel, though, all those things are a little easier and smoother to create with, and though this is a fairly unoriginal shooter it is very slick indeed. It's got power-ups, increasingly difficult baddies to blast and a whole bunch of fancy effects. It's a good quality effort and you should give it a try.



ALLEY OF HOLLOWS

■ **THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT** Alley Of Hollows that couldn't have been done in *LBP2* – aside from some of the extra layers and layer bounce pads – but considering the relatively short amount of time it's taken to put it together, it's hugely impressive. It certainly looks the part for a traditional *LBP*

platforming stage, but with animated lever actions, swooping decorative bits and bobs and even an on-rails section, it plays the part too. It's a little dark, which can make navigating the stage tricky, but that kind of helps you feel your way around the machinations of the creator's world. It's quite impressive.



ROOFTOP RAILINGS

■ **OKAY, SO THIS** level perhaps isn't the most original, but it is creative and it is obvious that a lot of effort has gone into it. And you know what? Gosh darn it we love a trier. There are a lot of little flourishes throughout the level, whether it's the juddering lips of the caricature leading you through the stage, moving structures that act as little more than decoration or badges and stamps *everywhere*. It's lovely, and you have to appreciate the effort this creator has put into every minute detail of their creation. Not everyone has the time to learn the intricacies of *LBP*'s Create mode. But with determination, anyone can make a great level. And it even makes use of the new Adventure feature too, tying together other equally pleasing levels. Good on you, pal.

BLUFFER'S GUIDE

INFAMOUS



WHAT IS IT?

■ **TO PUT IT** simply, the *inFamous* games are about being a superhero. Your character has a range of special abilities that you gain over the course of each game, enabling you to climb buildings, leap huge distances and take out large groups of enemies in combat. In terms of structure, the games are open-world, allowing you to take on missions and side quests as you see fit in order to earn experience. The Karma system means that the game's stories can play out in different ways, based on actions you've taken throughout the course of the games. The first entry in the PlayStation exclusive series was released on PS3 and was followed by *inFamous 2*, also released on PS3, in 2011. *inFamous: Second Son* saw the series transition to PS4 this year, giving it something of a fresh start, with developers Sucker Punch using the transition to a new generation as an opportunity to introduce us to a new protagonist. We also had a standalone follow up to *Second Son* in 2014 in the form of *inFamous: First Light*, which features a protagonist called Fetch.



THE STORY SO FAR

■ **THE FICTIONAL PREMISE** behind the superpowers that feature in the *inFamous* games is that a device called the Ray Sphere has unlocked the powers of those carrying the 'conduit' gene. In the first game, protagonist Cole MacGrath finds himself embroiled in a battle with a man named Kessler as he tries to destroy the Ray Sphere. After defeating him, Cole discovers that Kessler is a version of Cole who has travelled back in time from the future in order to prepare Cole for battle with an entity called The Beast. That provides the

set up for the second game in which Cole does indeed end up trying to destroy The Beast, ultimately being presented with a choice to kill The Beast and all conduits along with it, or work with the creature to save the conduits at the expense of the rest of humanity. The former is the canonical ending that's carried into *Second Son*, though not all conduits are dead. New protagonist Delsin Rowe finds himself going up against an regime that is trying to hunt down every remaining conduit, eventually bringing them down at the end of the game.

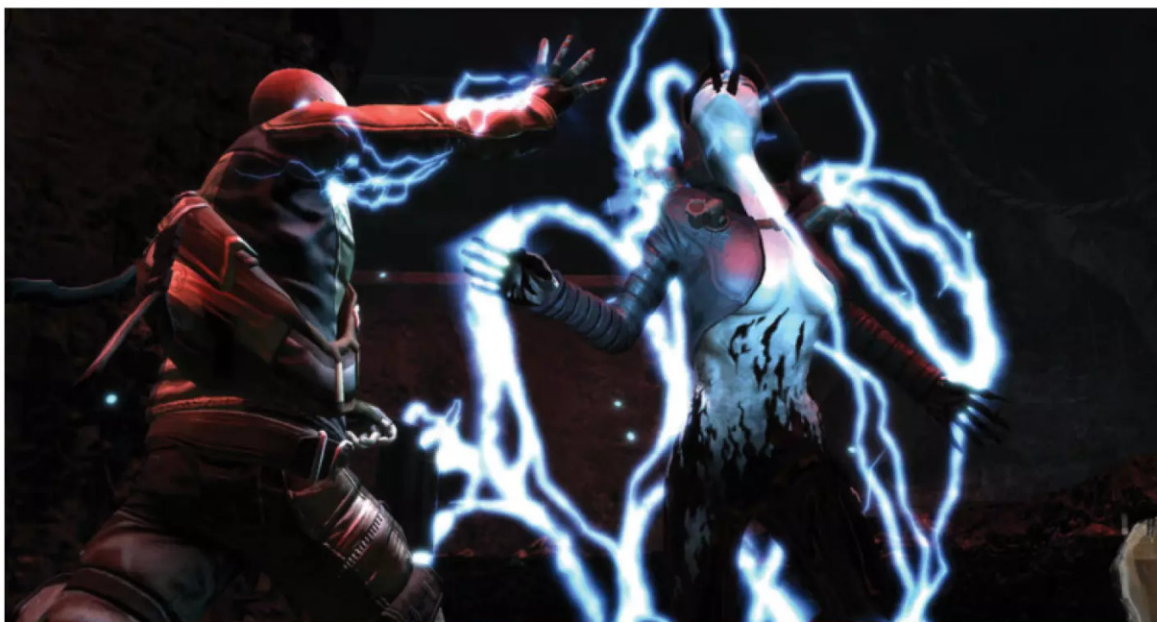


WHERE TO START

■ **THE BEST GAME** in the *inFamous* series is *inFamous: Second Son*, so if you've got a PS4, that's the game you're likely to have the most fun with. Additionally, you don't have to worry too much about being left out of the loop from a narrative perspective. Not only does the game represent a narrative break from Cole MacGrath's story in the original two games, in that it presents us with an entirely new protagonist



in the form of Delsin Rowe, it also takes place in an entirely different city. The first two *inFamous* games were set in the fictional Empire City and New Marais respectively, while *Second Son* takes place in real-life Seattle. If you're looking to jump in on PS3, we'd say that *inFamous 2* is the slightly better game, but we wouldn't necessarily advise against going back to the original if you want to start from the story's beginning.



ANY SPIN-OFFS?

■ **MOST RECENTLY, THERE'S** the aforementioned *First Light*, a standalone expansion for *Second Son* that expands on the story of Fetch, one of the characters from the main game. It's not the first time Sucker Punch has made that move, either. *inFamous: Festival Of Blood* is a standalone expansion for *inFamous 2*. It's got vampires in it. There's also a crappy browser and Facebook game that were released to advertise *inFamous* and *inFamous 2* respectively.



ANYTHING BESIDES GAMES?

■ **TO COINCIDE WITH** the release of *inFamous 2*, Sucker Punch released a one-off comic in collaboration with DC. The tie-in fits in with the series somewhat in that comic book-like cutscenes are used to tell the games' story. There was also talk of an *inFamous* film being worked on at Sony, with screenwriter Sheldon Turner allegedly brought in to work on the script in 2009. Given that we've heard nothing since, we think it's safe to assume that particular project is dead.

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?



COLE MACGRATH

The protagonist of the first two *inFamous* games, MacGrath was a bike messenger before being transformed into a super-powered badass with abilities based on electricity. In an alternate timeline, he had a wife and children that were killed by The Beast (a virtually unstoppable conduit/creature), leading him to travel back in time and manipulate the Cole that we know in order to prepare him for battle with said Beast.



DELSIN ROWE

The star of *inFamous: Second Son* is a rebellious youngster with a penchant for street art who lives on the Akomish reservation. He discovers that he has the ability to absorb the powers of other conduits when a number of them escape from a prison convoy near his reservation. After antagonist Brooke Augustine leaves his community doomed, Delsin realises he must absorb her power in order to save them and heads off to Seattle in order to do so.



FETCH

Fetch is a conduit that was turned over to the authorities by her parents when her powers awakened during adolescence. In *Second Son*, Delsin encounters Fetch as something of a rogue conduit who has been killing drug dealers as a way of avenging her dead brother and persuades her to show more restraint (or not, if *inFamous* Delsin has his way). In *First Light*, we get to play as Fetch and see her story prior to the events of *Second Son*.

TROPHY GUIDE

PS PLUS TROPHY GUIDE



INJUSTICE: GODS AMONG US

PLATFORM: PS4 DIFFICULTY: 5/5

TROPHIES: 51 1 2 10 38

■ **FIGHTING GAMES ARE** often the bane of Trophy hunters, and *Injustice* is no different. Most of the Trophies will unlock naturally as you play, ticking off various aspects such as playing online, completing different modes and ranking up. The usual. Start off with some cheap and easy ones by customising your personal profile; this will net you the likes of 'I Can Back It Up' and 'Looking Good!' very quickly. After that you're going to have a grind on your hands to reach level 100, which will take a great deal of time. The real crux of the difficulty comes with Battle Mode, mostly thanks to the last mission that requires you to beat the cast of *Injustice* with a single health bar. For a helping hand, you'll want to pick either Grundy or Bane and use their special traits to power up before unleashing your best combos (and environmental gimmicks) to put foes down in the shortest time possible. It'll take a *lot* of practice, but you'll pick up the strategies for each character soon enough. Don't forget to use stage transitions to deal easy damage.



SECRET PONCHOS

PLATFORM: PS4 DIFFICULTY: 2/5

TROPHIES: 13 0 1 2 10

■ **SADLY THERE ISN'T** all that much to *Secret Ponchos* Trophies, what with most of them simply awarded just for winning a certain number of times, levelling up to the rank of Death Bringer and the like. There are Trophies associated with killing players of a particular rank, too, so there's an element of luck since it requires hoping you'll come up against a crappy player who has played it for a while – which is unlikely. 'High Streak Ender' might sound luck-based too – what with it requiring you to end an Outlaw's 10 or more kill streak, but there is a trick to it. Play in a 1v1 match, for example, and let that player kill you 10 times, that way you know they've got the kill streak and no one else has killed them. Then you simply need to kill them once for the Trophy; sure, you're not likely to win the match, but needs must and all that. Outside of that there isn't really all that much you can control with these Trophies, so just keep playing.

HITMAN HD COLLECTION

PLATFORM: PS3 DIFFICULTY: 2/5

TROPHIES: 80 3 21 25 31

■ **THREE PLATINUMS ALL** bundled into one here, so you'll need to be willing to put the time in. It's worth noting that each game's difficulty-based Trophies do stack, so completing the game on the hardest difficulty first could save you a lot of time. Additionally, each game also has Trophies for collecting (either finding in-game or buying) all the various weapons available, as well as completing a mission with exactly 47 kills – something that might be better achieved by restarting a mission later on. Since you'll also want to aim for the Trophies unlocked for playing the game silently, that should be your main focus – avoid being detected, silently kill anyone who does spot you and restart checkpoints should you get caught too often. This will need to be done on the hardest difficulty, too. Each of the games do have some bespoke Trophies to collect too – such as drowning someone, accumulating \$5 million in cash or obtaining a katana – so make sure you take a good look all of the Trophies in the list before playing because there are a *lot* of them.





FINAL HORIZON

PLATFORM: VITA DIFFICULTY: 2/5
TROPHIES: 43 1 4 14 24

■ **TOWER DEFENCE GAMES** are well-suited to the Vita, and if you want to get the Platinum you're going to want to settle in. As with most games of its ilk, it's all about clearing out those waves of enemies. There are Trophies associated with killing upwards of 2,500 of a particular type of pest, and while you'll kill a large number just through level practice, you may need to still grind some post-game. There are special abilities you'll get too, and unique Trophies associated with those. In particular 'Everyone's dead, Dave!' in which you need to kill just a single enemy with an Orbital Bombardment. It sounds easy, but it's trickier than you might think – it's all about timing, so if you see a single enemy left, get rid of all your towers and hit it with the bombardment.

DEADLY PREMONITION

PLATFORM: PS3 DIFFICULTY: 1/5
TROPHIES: 43 1 1 6 35

■ **THE ENTHRALLINGLY WEIRD** *Deadly Premonition* might not be a difficult Platinum to get, but at roughly 30 or more hours of playtime it's quite a lengthy one. This is mostly because every Trophy you can earn is tied to one of the game's main or side missions, so as long as you track down and complete everything then you have zero chance of missing anything. Of course with a weird game like *Deadly Premonition*, that might be easier said than done – especially since not all missions are available all the time – but as long as you're thorough, keep track of everything and make sure to check key places regularly you likely won't miss anything. There's a list in the menus of which events are available and when, which will be your best friend as you chase down this easy but long-winded Platinum.



TITAN ATTACKS

PLATFORM: PS4/PS3/VITA DIFFICULTY: 1/5
TROPHIES: 13 0 1 3 9

■ **THIS GAME IS** basically a fast-paced *Space Invaders*, but sadly isn't much to go on if you're a Trophy hunter. You'll get a handful for completing each – and subsequently every – stage, and a couple for killing 100 alien saucers. Try to focus on collecting the aliens as and when they drop, too, since there's a Trophy for collecting 100 of those too. The only thing you'll need to work towards, really, is upgrading your ship to the max and shooting down falling saucers for skill shots – you'll need 100 of them as well. That's literally all there is to it.

INSTANT GAME
COLLECTION

DC UNIVERSE ONLINE

You don't always have to wait for the next PlayStation Plus announcement to get free games. SOE's superhero MMO is just one example of some of the great PS4 freebies out there...



■ **DC UNIVERSE ONLINE** is an MMO with a difference. This is an MMO very much built for consoles and as such, rather than being about managing cooldowns and macros, the game is far more action based, lending itself well to being played with a controller.

Of course, the game still has elements common to the MMO genre. After starting up *DC Universe Online* and creating your superhero or villain, you'll end up choosing a role for yourself by virtue of the superpowers that you select as you upgrade your character. You can focus on being a damage dealer, a damage-absorbing Tank, a Healer, or a Controller who can debuff enemies.

When you're playing *DC Universe Online* as a free-to-play game, it's worth bearing in mind that you will be limited in some ways. You can create up to two

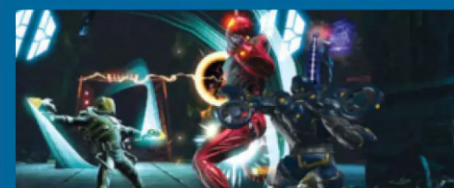
characters, as opposed to 16 for subscribers, and have a limited inventory. As well as a subscription there are various other packs and bundles that you can purchase, too, but none of that should stop you having fun if you don't want to open your wallet.

Indeed, there are plenty of missions doled out by the likes of Superman, The Joker and Batman (depending on your faction and class), NPC missions to take on, small encounters that you can become engaged in while roaming the streets and PvP opportunities.

If you are into MMOs then *DC Universe Online* is obviously a no-brainer. Given that it's free-to-play and accessible to console players, though, it's also an excellent entry point into a genre that many may not be familiar with. So why not give it a try?

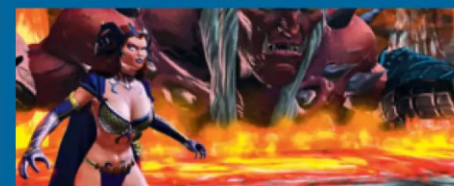
CLASS WARFARE

Powers in *DC Universe Online* will define your character. Here's how.



DPS

Every character starts off as a DPS class. If you want to continue to play as a damage dealer, it doesn't matter what power you pick, as every power has a DPS upgrade option.



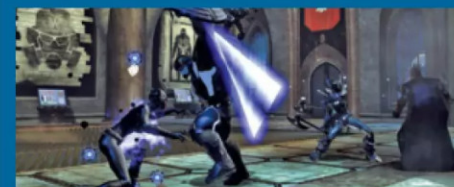
TANK

A tank's primary role is to absorb damage on behalf of the team. If you want to play as one, you'll need to pick the Fire, Ice, Earth, Rage or Experimental Serums power.



HEALER

The name says it all – healers are responsible for healing their team. The powers that you'll need in order to play this role are Sorcery, Nature, Electricity, Celestial or Atomic.



CONTROLLER

When playing in this role, you control the battlefield, using abilities to boost allies. To become one, you'll need to pick the Gadgets, Mental, Light, Quantum or Munitions power.

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BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT



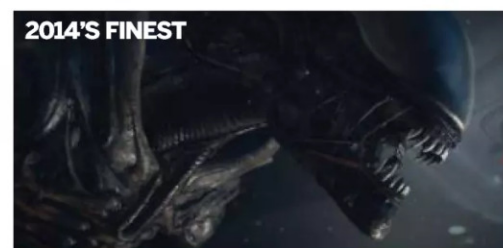
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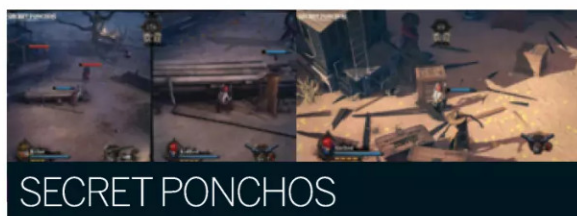
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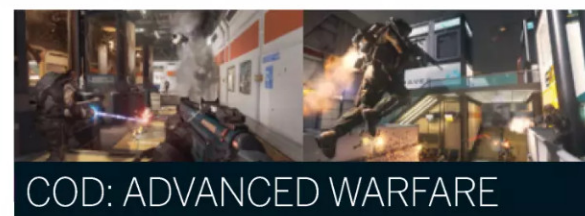
Keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter channels for information on our Twitch tournaments, where you can play videogames with us for the world to watch!

The game changes each time, and the best players will win prizes – free games, or just some of the other tat around our office. Come and join in the fun next time and you could win something neat.



SECRET PONCHOS

We like cowboys, we like shooting and we like multiplayer, which means we're on board with **Secret Ponchos**. After watching us for a while, perhaps you'll fancy your luck and try taking us on in a showdown?



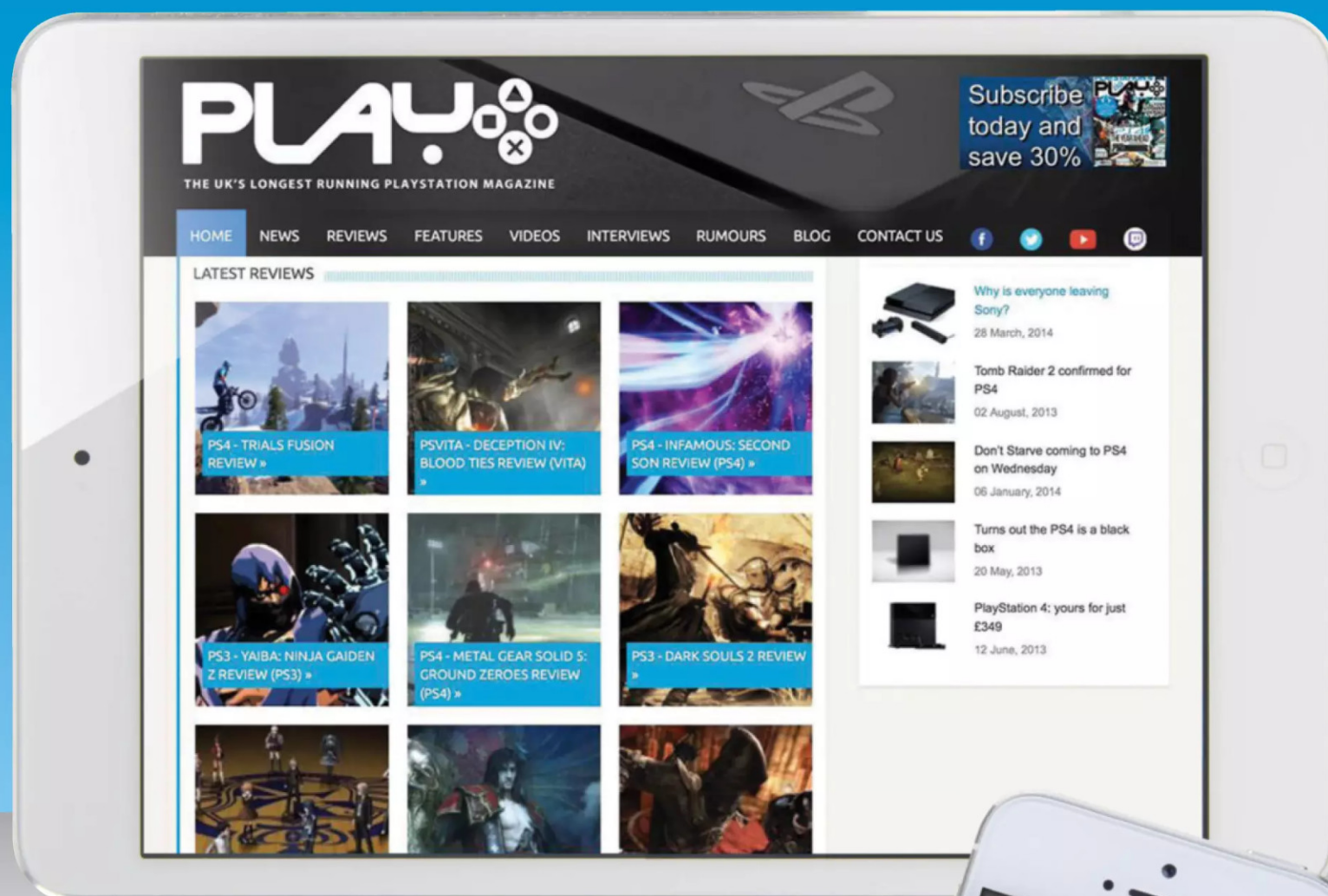
COD: ADVANCED WARFARE

Its multiplayer mode is bloody great, hence why we're still playing it. Come and give us tips on loadouts. If you catch us on a day where we're actually playing, well, we might even venture to give you one or two tips of our own.

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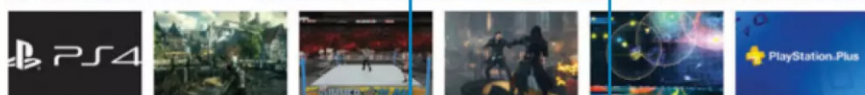
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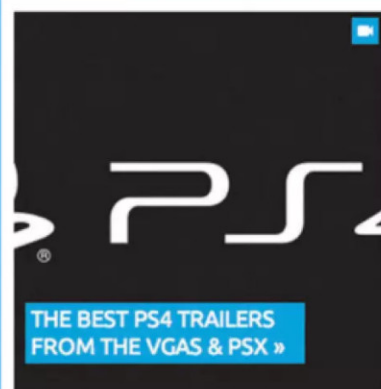
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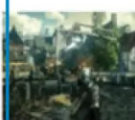
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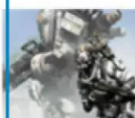
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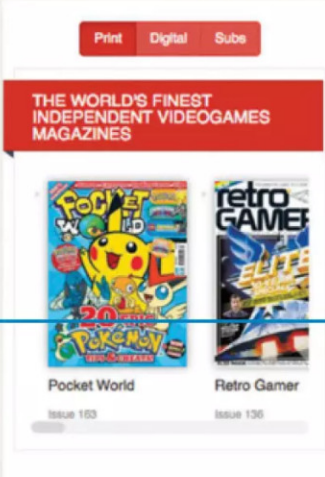
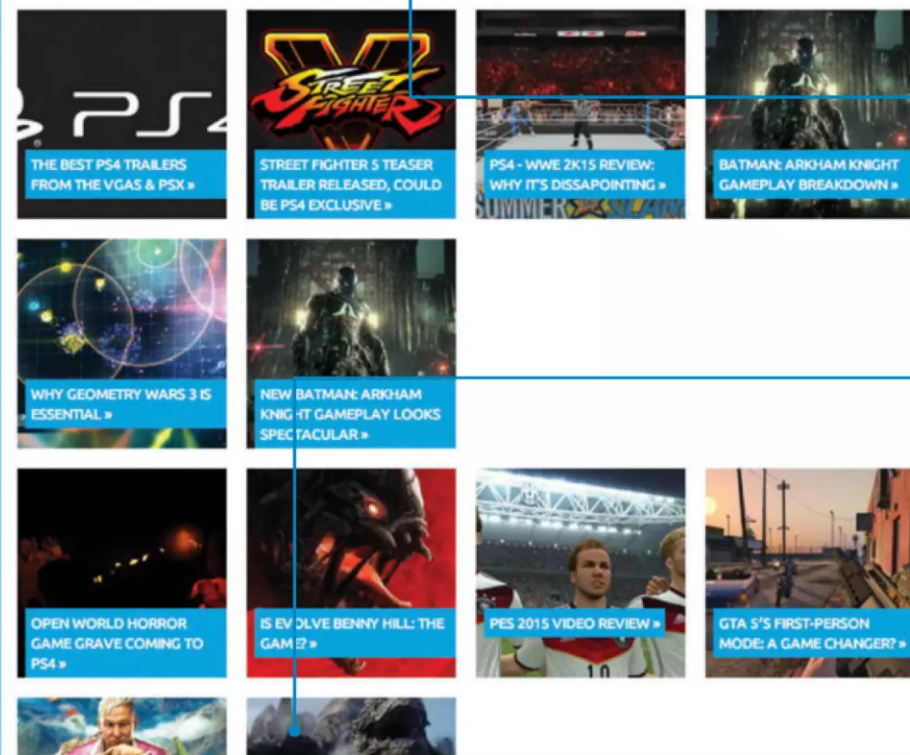
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UNBIASED OPINIONS YOU CAN TRUST

PLAY-MAG.CO.UK

PLAY+ PLUS PlayList

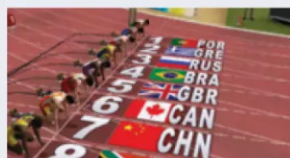
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT A GAME SCORED THEN THESE PAGES ARE FOR YOU

TEAM PICKS CONTROLLER BREAKERS



top five LUKE ALBIGÉS

- 1 Super Monkey Ball
- 2 Rock Band 3
- 3 Pro Evolution Soccer 6
- 4 Dark Souls
- 5 Spelunky



top five LIAM WARR

- 1 Beijing 2008
- 2 Every FIFA ever
- 3 Battlefield 4
- 4 Motorstorm RC
- 5 NBA 2K14



top five DREW SLEEP

- 1 The Binding Of Isaac: Rebirth
- 2 Devil May Cry 3
- 3 Viewtiful Joe
- 4 Demon's Souls
- 5 Crash Bandicoot




top five PAUL WALKER-EMIG

- 1 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
- 2 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
- 3 Pro Evolution Soccer 5
- 4 Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 2
- 5 Syphon Filter

PS4 LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag	237	83%
Assassin's Creed: Unity	251	65%
Alien: Isolation	249	90%
Battlefield 4	238	80%
Bound By Flame	245	62%
Call Of Duty: Advanced Warfare	251	87%
Call Of Duty: Ghosts	238	75%
Child Of Light	244	79%
CounterSpy	248	50%
Daylight	245	20%
Dead Nation: Apocalypse Edition	242	74%
Destiny	249	85%
Diablo III: Reaper Of Souls	248	92%
Disney Infinity 2.0	249	80%
Don't Starve	240	81%
Dragon Age: Inquisition	251	84%
Driveclub	250	77%
Dynasty Warriors 8 XLCE	243	80%
EA Sports UFC	246	75%
The Evil Within	250	84%
Far Cry 4	251	80%
Fez	243	95%
FIFA 15	249	85%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	243	85%
Grand Theft Auto V	251	97%
Hohokum	248	80%
inFamous: First Light	249	55%
inFamous: Second Son	242	86%
Killzone Shadow Fall	238	80%
Killzone Shadow Fall: Intercept	246	84%
Knack	238	55%
Lego Marvel Super Heroes	238	85%
Lego The Hobbit	244	65%
LittleBigPlanet 3	251	92%
Lords Of The Fallen	251	75%
Mercenary Kings	244	85%
Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes	242	85%
Middle-earth: Shadow Of Mordor	250	80%
Murdered: Soul Suspect	246	48%
NBA 2K15	250	84%
Need For Speed Rivals	238	83%
NHL 15	249	63%
Octodad: Dadliest Catch	244	60%
PES2015	250	88%
Plants Vs Zombies: Garden Warfare	248	71%
Outlast	241	73%
Resogun	238	91%
 An addictive and accomplished shoot-'em-up, Resogun is an indie delight and a surprise PS4 launch highlight. Awesome stuff.		
Resogun Heroes	247	93%
Rogue Legacy	248	91%
Skylanders Swap Force	238	77%
Skylanders Trap Team	250	79%
Sniper Elite III	246	72%
The Amazing Spider-Man 2	245	25%
The Binding Of Isaac: Rebirth	251	90%
The Last Of Us Remastered	247	94%
Thief	241	70%
Tiny Brains	240	68%
Transistor	245	87%
Transformers: Rise Of The Dark Spark	247	30%
Trials Fusion	244	80%
Valiant Hearts	247	64%
War Thunder	239	80%
Watch Dogs	245	80%
Warriors Orochi 3 Ultimate	249	62%
Wolfenstein: The New Order	245	78%

GAME

ISSUE

SCORE

PS3 LISTING



007 Legends	225	44%
2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil	244	69%
3D Dot Game Heroes	192	87%
50 Cent: Blood On The Sand	177	70%
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon	211	78%
The Adventures Of Tintin	212	58%
Afro Samurai	177	61%
After Burner Climax	193	91%
Agarest: Generations Of War	187	78%
Agarest: Generations Of War 2	223	43%
Agarest: Generations Of War Zero	209	52%
Age Of Booty	172	81%
Air Conflicts: Secret Wars	208	58%
Alice: Madness Returns	207	57%
Alien Breed: Impact	196	80%
Alien Breed 2: Assault	201	82%
Alien Breed 3: Descent	204	61%
Aliens: Colonial Marines	230	45%
Aliens Vs Predator	189	79%
All Zombies Must Die!	214	64%
Alone In The Dark	173	70%
Alpha Protocol	193	83%
Amy	215	19%
Anarchy: Rush Hour	194	73%
Ape Escape	208	55%
Aquapazza: Aquaplus Dream Match	239	70%
Aqua Panic	193	68%
Arcana Heart 3	207	79%
Armageddon Riders	207	65%
Armored Core: For Answer	173	65%
Armored Core 4	153	67%
Armored Core V	217	60%
Army Of Two	164	80%
Army Of Two: The 40th Day	188	65%
Army Of Two: The Devil's Cartel	231	44%
Assassin's Creed	161	58%
Assassin's Creed II	186	89%
Assassin's Creed III	225	78%
Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood	199	91%
Assassin's Creed: Revelations	212	75%
Assassin's Creed: Rogue	251	74%
Asura's Wrath	216	67%
Atelier Ayesha: The Alchemist Of Dust	230	60%
Atelier Rorona: The Alchemist Of Arland	198	77%
Backbreaker	193	70%
Back To The Future: It's About Time	204	71%
The Baconing	210	72%
Band Hero	187	68%
Batman: Arkham Asylum	183	85%
Batman: Arkham City	211	94%
Batman: Arkham Origins	237	85%
Battle Fantasia	176	67%
Battlefield 1943	182	89%
Battlefield: Bad Company	168	78%
Battlefield: Bad Company 2	190	93%
Battlefield 3	212	88%
Battleship	219	44%
Bayonetta*	187	93%
The Beatles: Rock Band	184	96%
Beat Hazard Ultra	213	79%
Beat Sketcher	201	85%
Beyond Good & Evil HD	207	86%
Beyond: Two Souls	236	70%
Binary Domain	216	70%
Bionic Commando	179	82%
Bionic Commando Rearmed	169	88%
Bionic Commando Rearmed 2	203	61%
BioShock	172	93%
BioShock 2	189	88%
BioShock Infinite	230	97%
Birds Of Steel	217	55%
BlackSite	163	43%

GAME

ISSUE


SCORE

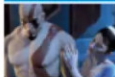
Blade Kitten	197	72%
Bladestorm: The Hundred Years' War	160	58%
Blast Factor	152	72%
BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger	190	85%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift	198	94%
Blazing Angels	151	54%
Bleach: Soul Resurrección	209	63%
Blitz: The League II	172	67%
Blokus	202	54%
BloodRayne: Betrayal	211	62%
Blur	193	86%
Bodycount	210	54%
Bombberman Ultra	185	82%
Borderlands	185	80%
Borderlands 2	223	90%
Borderlands: The Pre-Sequel	250	69%
The Bourne Conspiracy	168	72%
Braid	188	93%
Brink	206	67%
Brothers: A Tale Of Two Sons	233	83%
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	171	75%
Brütal Legend	185	79%
Bulletstorm	203	86%
The Bureau: XCOM Declassified	235	57%
Burnout Crash	211	79%
Burnout Paradise	162	74%
Burn Zombie Burn	178	85%
Buzz! Quiz TV	168	82%
Buzz! Quiz World	185	70%
Calling All Cars	155	81%
Call Of Duty 3	151	77%
Call Of Duty: World At War	173	68%
Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare	160	88%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 2	186	94%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	212	88%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops	199	94%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops II	226	80%
Call Of Juarez: Bound In Blood	181	85%
Call Of Juarez: Gunslinger	232	80%
Call Of Juarez: The Cartel	208	30%
Captain America: Super Soldier	208	70%
Castle Crashers	200	88%
Castlevania: Harmony Of Despair	212	67%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow	197	85%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow 2	241	81%
Carnival Island	213	53%
Catan	195	85%
Cars 2	208	68%
The Cave	230	77%
Catherine	215	61%
Champion Jockey	210	50%
Chronicles Of Riddick: Assault On Dark Athena	178	87%
Child Of Eden	211	80%
Chime Super Deluxe	203	80%
Civilization Revolution	168	90%
Clash Of The Titans	193	65%
Clive Barker's Jericho	159	84%
The Club	163	80%
Colin McRae: DiRT	158	91%
Colin McRae: DiRT 2	184	87%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3	178	65%
Commander's Challenge	185	68%
Command & Conquer	175	44%
Comet Crash	186	84%
Comix Zone	210	62%
Conan	160	71%
Condemned 2	165	78%
Costume Quest	199	70%
Conflict: Denied Ops	164	50%
Counter Strike: Global Offensive	223	89%
Crash Commando	174	80%
Crash Time 4: The Syndicate	218	37%
Crazy Machines Elements	210	71%
Create	199	71%
Critter Crunch	188	91%
Cross Edge	182	59%
Crystal Defenders	184	48%
Crysis 2	204	72%


THIS MONTH'S NEW ENTRIES

The newest games, freshly squeezed among all your old favourites

Assassin's Creed: Unity	65%
Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare	87%
Grand Theft Auto V	97%
Far Cry 4	80%
LittleBigPlanet 3	92%
Dragon Age: Inquisition	84%
Assassin's Creed: Rogue	74%
Lords Of The Fallen	75%
The Binding of Isaac: Rebirth	90%




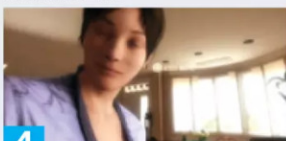
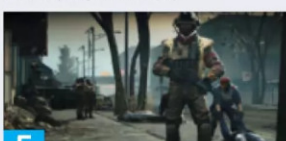
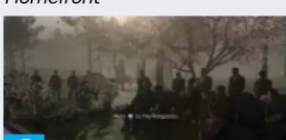

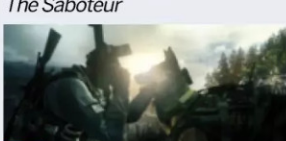


GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Crysis 3	230	61%
Cubixx HD	207	76%
The Cursed Crusade	211	40%
Damnation	181	38%
Damage Inc: Pacific Squadron WWII	223	37%
Dance Dance Revolution	201	52%
Dante's Inferno	189	80%
Dark Mist	164	53%
The Darkness	154	91%
The Darkness II	215	76%
Dark Sector	165	62%
Dark Souls	211	90%
Dark Souls II	242	90%
Darkstalkers Resurrection	230	82%
Dark Void	188	81%
Darksiders	188	83%
Darksiders II	221	86%
DC Universe Online	202	80%
de Blob 2	203	65%
Dead Or Alive 5	223	78%
Dead Island	210	79%
Dead Island: Riptide	231	65%
Dead Rising 2	197	78%
Dead Rising 2: Off The Record	211	61%
Dead Space	172	87%
Dead Space 2	201	92%
Dead Space 3	228	70%
Dead Space: Extraction	203	88%
Dead Space: Ignition	199	47%
Dead To Rights: Retribution	192	68%
Deadly Premonition: The Director's Cut	231	82%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Deadpool	233	60%
DeathSpank	195	83%
Def Jam: Icon	151	79%
Def Jam Rapstar	199	72%
Defiance	231	50%
Demon's Souls	193	92%
Destroy All Humans!: Path Of The Furon	178	29%
Derrick The Deathfin	227	79%
Deus Ex: Human Revolution	209	91%
Devil May Cry 4	163	89%
Devil May Cry HD Collection	217	80%
Diablo III	235	89%
DiRT 3	206	85%
DiRT Showdown	219	84%
Disgaea 3: Absence Of Justice	175	81%
Dishonored	224	92%
Disney Infinity	235	81%
DJ Hero	186	91%
DJ Hero 2	198	88%
Doctor Who: The Eternity Clock	220	32%
Doom 3: BFG Edition	225	69%
Double Dragon Neon	224	37%
DmC Devil May Cry	227	93%
 DmC injects new life into one of the best genres in all of gaming, and does so with a style and confidence that elevates it beyond its roots.		
Dragon Age: Origins	186	82%
Dragon Age II	203	86%
Dragon Ball: Raging Blast	186	40%
Dragon Ball Z: Burst Limit	168	61%
Dragon's Crown	235	87%
Driver: San Francisco	209	68%
Droplitz	184	91%
Duke Nukem Forever	207	33%
D&D: Chronicles Of Mystara	233	80%
Dungeon Siege III	206	80%
Dust 514	233	51%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam	160	40%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 2	176	43%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 3	208	56%
Dynasty Warriors: Strikeforce	189	37%
Dynasty Warriors 6: Empires	181	44%
Dynasty Warriors 7: Empires	230	40%
Dynasty Warriors 8	234	71%
Earthworm Jim HD	196	89%
EA Sports Active 2	200	81%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
EA Sports Grand Slam Tennis	215	75%
EA Sports MMA	198	89%
Eat Lead	178	38%
Eat Them!	202	60%
echochrome	169	85%
echochrome II	202	83%
EDF: Insect Armageddon	208	64%
The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	152	91%
The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	212	93%
Elfunk	170	45%
El Shaddai: Ascension Of The Metatron	208	77%
Enchanted Arms	152	69%
Enemy Territory: Quake Wars	168	60%
Enslaved: Odyssey To The West	197	83%
Epic Mickey 2: The Power Of Two	226	55%
Eternal Sonata	176	87%
Euforia	212	85%
Everybody's Golf 5	158	88%
Everybody's Golf: World Tour	165	91%
Explodemon	203	70%
Eye Of Judgment	159	65%
EyePet	185	83%
F1 2011	211	71%
F1 2012	223	79%
F1 Race Stars	226	61%
FaceBreaker	170	55%
Fairy Fencer F	250	43%
Fallout 3	173	97%
Fallout: New Vegas	198	88%
Family Guy: Back To The Multiverse	227	40%
Fantastic Four: Rise Of The Silver Surfer	155	39%
Far Cry 2	172	74%
Far Cry 3	226	88%
Far Cry 3: Blood Dragon	231	85%
Fat Princess	183	65%
Fatal Inertia EX	168	65%
FEAR	151	81%
FEAR 2: Project Origin	176	87%
FEAR 3	208	60%
FIFA 12	210	86%
FIFA 13	223	82%
FIFA 14	236	90%
FIFA Street (2012)	217	74%
Final Fight: Double Impact	193	90%
The Fight	199	42%
Fight Night Champion	203	88%
Fight Night Round 3	151	87%
Fight Night Round 4	181	84%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	236	81%
Final Fantasy XIII	190	85%
Final Fantasy XIII-2	214	80%
Final Fantasy XIII: Lightning Returns	240	80%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage	198	51%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage 2	230	58%
Flight Control HD	198	85%
Flock!	179	70%
Folklore	158	66%
Front Mission Evolved	198	52%
Frogger: Hyper Arcade Edition	221	55%
From Dust	211	82%
Fuel	180	49%
Full Auto 2: Battlegrounds	151	69%
Fuse	232	73%
Game Of Thrones	220	39%
Gatling Gears	207	62%
Genji: Days Of The Blade	151	38%
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	157	83%
Ghost Recon Future Soldier	219	60%
Ghostbusters: The Videogame	180	80%
GI Joe	183	22%
The Godfather	151	37%
The Godfather II	178	38%
God Of War III	190	88%
God Of War: Ascension	230	90%
 With brilliantly reworked combat mechanics and stunning graphics, Ascension is a gloriously violent prequel to the series.		
God Of War Collection*	188	93%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
God Of War Collection: Volume II	210	70%
The Golden Compass	162	32%
GoldenEye 007: Reloaded	213	63%
Gotham City Imposters	216	78%
Gran Turismo 5	200	85%
Gran Turismo 6	239	83%
Grand Theft Auto IV	166	98%
Grand Theft Auto V	236	97%
 Rockstar's latest is a masterpiece; the perfect swansong for the generation and a wonderful addition to the franchise.		
Greed Corp	191	75%
Green Day: Rock Band	194	77%
Greg Hastings Paintball 2	219	22%
Grid 2	232	79%
Grid Autosport	246	67%
GTI Club+	174	72%
GTA: Episodes From Liberty City	191	94%
Guardians Of Middle-earth	227	71%
Guitar Hero III	160	90%
Guitar Hero 5	184	81%
Guitar Hero: Aerosmith	168	63%
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits	182	76%
Guitar Hero Metallica	179	88%
Guitar Hero: Van Halen	189	65%
Guitar Hero: Warriors Of Rock	197	71%
Guitar Hero World Tour	173	95%
Gundemonium Collection	197	80%
Gunstar Heroes	181	85%
Hamsterball	194	72%
Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince	182	60%
Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix	155	32%
Haze	167	64%
Heavenly Sword	157	71%
Heavy Rain	189	94%
Heavy Weapon	187	75%
Heroes Over Europe	184	48%
Hitman: Absolution	225	93%
Hitman HD Trilogy	230	75%
Homefront	203	69%
The House Of The Dead 4	218	82%
The House Of The Dead: Overkill	212	75%
Hunted: The Demon's Forge	207	59%
Hustle Kings	190	87%
Hyperdimension Neptunia	202	21%
I Am Alive	217	64%
Ico & Shadow Of The Colossus HD	210	94%
IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds Of Prey	183	72%
The Incredible Hulk	168	52%
inFamous	180	81%
inFamous 2	207	83%
Inferno Pool	181	81%
Injustice: Gods Among Us	231	80%
Inversion	220	49%
Invincible Tiger: The Legend Of Han Tao	185	70%
Iron Man	166	58%
Iron Man 2	193	50%
The Jak And Daxter Trilogy	216	82%
Jak And Daxter: The Lost Frontier	187	59%
James Bond 007: Blood Stone	199	63%
James Cameron's Avatar: The Game	187	64%
JASF: Jane's Advanced Strike Fighters	217	30%
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure: All Star Battle	244	80%
Journey	216	87%
Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights	159	78%
Jurassic Park: The Game	194	60%
Just Cause 2	190	87%
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men	160	73%
Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days	196	71%
Katamari Forever	184	88%
Kick-Ass The Game	194	60%
Killer Is Dead	235	75%
Killzone HD	225	65%
Killzone 2	176	93%
Killzone 3	202	80%
Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 ReMIX	236	80%
Kingdoms Of Amalur: Reckoning	215	70%
The King Of Fighters XII	182	82%

*denotes import review

TOP TEN IN-GAME PROMPTS

-  **1** to Fist Pump
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon
-  **2** Press **X** to Jason
Heavy Rain
-  **3** **X** to punch boulder
Resident Evil 5
-  **4** **O** to kiss wife
Rainbow Six Patriots
-  **5** **X** to jump in mass grave
Homefront
-  **6** Hold **O** to pay respects
Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare
-  **7** Drive to Germany
The Saboteur
-  **8** Press **X** to bark
Call of Duty: Ghosts
-  **9** Hold **O** to disturb the remains
Destiny
-  **10** Press **X** to doubt
L.A. Noire

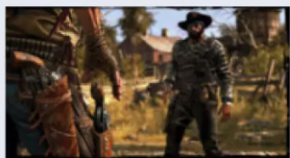
PLAY'S BEST GAMES IF YOU LOVE...



EXERCISING YOUR NOGGIN

PLAY: BRAID

This puzzle-platformer requires you to push your grey matter to the limit. Even once you've worked out how *Braid's* trademark time-reversal mechanic works in each world, you'll still be challenged.



ARCADE SHOOTERS

PLAY: CALL OF JUAREZ: GUNSLINGER

Gunslinger constantly foregrounds the fact that it's a videogame as it challenges you to chain kills together and go for high scores. It's also got awesome duels and does some interesting things with its story.



HALLOWE'EN

PLAY: COSTUME QUEST

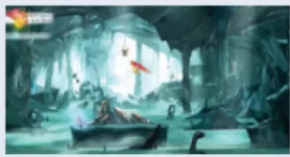
Double Fine's JRPG-like *Costume Quest* follows a gang of kids with Halloween costumes that allows them to transform into giant robots, knights and unicorns in battle.



POTTY-MOUTHED CARTOONS

PLAY: SOUTH PARK: THE STICK OF TRUTH


The Stick of Truth really does look like an episode of South Park and with Trey Parker and Matt Stone penning the script, it's got the humour too. It's also a surprisingly good RPG.





PRETTY THINGS


PLAY: CHILD OF LIGHT

Okay, so the writing is awful, but don't let that put you off. This 2D JRPG-inspired title is well worth a shot for fans of the genre, if for no other reason than that it is astonishingly beautiful.


GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
The King Of Fighters XIII	213	76%
Knights Contract	202	53%
Kung Fu Panda 2	207	20%
Kung Fu Rider	196	65%
Lair	158	52%
Landit Bandit	195	66%
LA Noire	206	91%
Lara Croft And The Guardian Of Light	198	90%
The Last Guy	171	91%
Last Rebellion	191	42%
Lead And Gold: Gangs Of The Wild West	193	65%
Legend Of Spyro: Dawn Of The Dragon	174	54%
Legendary	173	62%
Lego Batman	173	65%
Lego Batman 2	221	80%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 1-4	194	79%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 5-7	213	67%
Lego Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures	167	73%
Lego Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	187	71%
Lego Pirates Of The Caribbean	206	76%
Lego Rock Band	187	75%
Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga	160	76%
Lego Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	204	79%
Lego: The Lord Of The Rings	227	85%
Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust	180	24%
Limbo	209	90%
LittleBigPlanet	172	94%
LittleBigPlanet 2	201	96%
LittleBigPlanet: Karting	225	85%
LocoRoco Cocoreccho!	159	80%
Lollipop Chainsaw	221	72%
London 2012	221	45%
The Lord Of The Rings: Aragorn's Quest	199	60%
The Lord Of The Rings: Conquest	175	52%
The Lord Of The Rings: War In The North	213	42%
Lost Planet 2	192	75%
Lost Planet 3	236	58%
Lost Planet: Extreme Condition	163	69%
Lumines Supernova	178	90%
Madagascar 3	224	39%
Madden NFL 12	209	85%
Madden NFL 13	223	86%
Madden NFL Arcade	188	58%
Mad Riders	220	70%
Mafia II	196	81%
MAG	189	68%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker	202	84%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker 2012	208	70%
Majin And The Forsaken Kingdom	199	72%
Marvel Vs Capcom 2	182	90%
Marvel Vs Capcom 3	202	88%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	151	64%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2	185	57%
Max Payne 3	219	77%
Mass Effect 2	201	97%
Mass Effect 3	216	93%
Medal Of Honor	198	86%
Medal Of Honor Airborne	161	85%
Medal Of Honor: Warfighter	225	72%
Mega Man 9	172	75%
Mega Man 10	192	82%
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	171	78%
Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance	228	91%
 <i>Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance</i> is another world-class entry in gaming's most fundamentally playable genre.		
Metal Gear Solid 4	167	92%
Metal Gear Solid HD Collection	214	91%
Metro: Last Light	231	60%
Michael Jackson: The Experience	205	58%
Microbot	202	51%
Midnight Club: Los Angeles	173	84%
Mindjack	202	38%
Minecraft	240	93%
Mini Ninjas	184	80%
Mirror's Edge	173	71%
MLB: The Show 14	245	90%
ModNation Racers	192	90%
Monkey Island 2: Special Edition	195	94%
Mortal Kombat	205	85%
Mortal Kombat Vs DC Universe	173	68%
MotoGP 13	233	74%
Motorhead	173	60%
MotorStorm	151	92%
MotorStorm: Apocalypse	203	76%
MotorStorm: Pacific Rift	172	93%
Mud: FIM Motocross Championship	217	50%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
MX Vs ATV Alive	206	42%
MX Vs ATV Reflex	189	68%
MX Vs ATV Untamed	164	58%
naï'd	201	61%
Namco Museum Essentials	193	60%
Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm	174	59%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS Generations	217	53%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS 3	230	85%
Naughty Bear	195	64%
NBA 2K12	211	88%
NBA 2K13	224	88%
NBA Jam	200	68%
NBA Street: Homecourt	151	68%
Need For Speed Carbon	151	76%
Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit	199	91%
Need For Speed: Most Wanted	225	95%
 <i>Need For Speed: Most Wanted</i> is easily the best arcade racer of this generation. We absolutely love it.		
Need For Speed ProStreet	161	86%
Need For Speed Shift	184	81%
Need For Speed: The Run	213	63%
Need For Speed Undercover	173	75%
NeverDead	215	39%
Nier	192	54%
Ni No Kuni: Wrath Of The White Witch	227	85%
NHL 12	210	78%
NHL 13	223	74%
NIGHTS Into Dreams...	224	75%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma	154	88%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2	184	82%
Ninja Gaiden 3	217	63%
Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge	231	80%
Noby Noby Boy	177	85%
No More Heroes: Heroes' Paradise	206	89%
Nucleus	155	82%
Okami HD	225	90%
One Piece: Pirate Warriors	224	69%
Operation Flashpoint: Dragon Rising	185	78%
Operation Flashpoint: Red River	205	75%
The Orange Box	161	93%
Outland	207	72%
OutRun Online Arcade	180	80%
Overlord II	181	68%
Pac-Man Championship Edition DX	201	91%
Pain	183	69%
Payday: The Heist	213	88%
Payday 2	235	79%
Peggle	189	94%
Persona 4 Arena	231	91%
 Essential for both <i>Persona</i> fans and fighting game enthusiasts, <i>Persona 4 Arena</i> is an absolute joy to play.		
Persona 4 Arena Ultimax	250	92%
PES 2012	210	74%
PixelJunk 4am	220	40%
PixelJunk Eden	169	67%
PixelJunk Shooter	187	93%
PixelJunk Shooter 2	204	90%
PixelJunk SideScroller	213	77%
PixelJunk Racers	160	74%
Planet Minigolf	196	58%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
PlayStation Move Heroes	204	54%
Poker Night 2	232	55%
Port Royale 3: Pirates & Merchants	224	54%
Portal 2	205	95%
Prince Of Persia	174	83%
Prince Of Persia: Classic	173	67%
Prince Of Persia: The Forgotten Sands	193	68%
Prince Of Persia Trilogy	200	88%
Prison Break: The Conspiracy	191	40%
Prototype	181	76%
Prototype 2	219	75%
Puddle	216	76%
The Punisher: No Mercy	182	49%
Puppeteer	236	70%
Pure	171	80%
Puzzle Chronicles	194	70%
Puzzle Dimensions	208	81%
Puzzle Quest Galactrix	181	68%
Quantum Conundrum	221	90%
Quantum Of Solace	175	57%
Quantum Theory	197	29%
Race Driver: GRID	167	85%
Ratchet & Clank: Q-Force	227	52%
Rag Doll Kung-Fu: Fists Of Plastic	179	83%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Rage	211	60%
Rainbow Moon	221	68%
Rainbow Six Vegas	155	88%
Rainbow Six Vegas 2	164	78%
Rango	203	54%
Ratchet & Clank: A Crack In Time	186	82%
Ratchet & Clank: All 4 One	211	68%
Ratchet & Clank: Tools Of Destruction	160	72%
Ratchet & Clank Trilogy HD	221	88%
Rayman Legends	235	83%
Rayman Origins	212	80%
Red Dead Redemption	193	92%
Red Faction: Armageddon	207	62%
Red Faction: Guerrilla	180	80%
Remember Me	232	61%
Renegade Ops	211	78%
Resident Evil Chronicles HD Collection	221	82%
Resident Evil Code Veronica X	211	72%
Resident Evil: Operation Raccoon City	217	33%
Resident Evil: Revelations HD	232	71%
Resident Evil 4 HD	210	93%
Resident Evil 5	177	86%
Resident Evil 6	223	88%
Resistance: Fall Of Man	151	83%
Resistance 2	173	90%
Resistance 3	210	88%
Resonance Of Fate	191	79%
Retro City Rampage	228	78%
Ridge Racer 7	151	75%
Ridge Racer Unbounded	217	67%
Riff: Everyday Shooter	162	86%
Rise Of The Argonauts	176	58%
Risen 2: Dark Waters	222	58%
Risen 3: Titan Lords	248	25%
Risk: Factions	202	80%
Rock Band Blitz	223	80%
Rock Band	169	94%
Rock Band 2	179	96%
Rock Band 3	199	84%
Rocksmith	223	78%
Rogue Warrior	188	09%
Rugby World Cup 2011	209	49%
Rune Factory Oceans	220	51%
RUSE	197	82%
The Saboteur	187	67%
Sacred 2: Fallen Angel	180	76%
Sacred 3	247	60%
Saints Row 2	172	79%
Saints Row: The Third	211	88%
SBK Generations	220	51%
Saint Seiya: Sanctuary Battle	216	52%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep1	194	90%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep2	194	92%
Savage Moon	175	87%
Saw	186	52%
Saw II: Flesh & Blood	198	36%
Scott Pilgrim Vs The World	197	77%
The Secret Of Monkey Island SE	195	92%
Sega Rally Online Arcade	208	74%
Sega Mega Drive Ultimate Collection	177	85%
Section 8: Prejudice	209	80%
SBK 2011	206	70%
SBK Generations	220	54%
SBK X: Superbike World Championship	193	67%
Sega Rally	158	92%
Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes	198	76%
Shadows Of The Damned	207	79%
Shank	197	86%
Shatter	183	91%
Shaun White Skateboarding	198	70%
Shaun White Snowboarding	173	72%
Shellshock 2: Blood Trails	177	32%
Shift 2: Unleashed	204	66%
The Shoot	199	76%
Shoot Many Robots	217	81%
Silent Hill: Downpour	217	81%
Silent Hill HD Collection	217	76%
Silent Hill: Homecoming	174	64%
The Simpsons Arcade Game	216	54%
The Simpsons Game	160	82%
The Sims 3	199	87%
The Sims 3: Pets	212	70%
SingStar	159	80%
Singularity	195	80%
Siren Blood Curse	170	62%
Skate	159	86%
Skate 2	175	82%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Skate 3	192	86%
Skullgirls	218	88%
Sleeping Dogs	222	80%
The Sly Collection	200	84%
Sly Cooper: Thieves In Time	230	60%
Sniper Elite V2	218	52%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior	206	45%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2	230	55%
SOCOM: Special Forces	205	63%
Sonic Adventure	198	63%
Sonic Adventure 2	225	69%
Sonic CD	214	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 1	199	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 2	225	40%
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	190	78%
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	227	88%
Sonic Generations	212	70%
Sonic The Hedgehog	151	52%
Sonic Unleashed	175	48%
Sorcery	219	76%
SoulCalibur IV	169	94%
SoulCalibur V	214	80%
South Park: The Stick of Truth	242	81%
Spec Ops: The Line	220	59%
Spider-Man 3	155	33%
Spider-Man: Edge Of Time	212	38%
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	197	69%
Spider-Man: Web Of Shadows	173	55%
Spin Jam	174	32%
Splatterhouse	200	58%
Splinter Cell Double Agent	153	79%
Split/Second: Velocity	192	90%
Sports Champions	196	83%
Sports Champions 2	225	65%
SSX	216	45%
Stacking	203	88%
Starhawk	219	81%
Star Ocean: The Last Hope International	190	63%
Star Trek	231	52%
Star Trek: D-A-C	189	57%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	171	65%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	199	61%
Star Wars: Pinball	230	79%
Start The Party!	196	72%
Stormrise	178	51%
Stranglehold	159	65%
Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike Online Edition	209	92%
Street Fighter IV	176	95%
Street Fighter X Tekken	217	83%
Strength Of The Sword 3	234	81%
Strider	242	62%
Super Puzzle Fighter II HD Turbo Remix	168	78%
Super Rub-A-Dub	151	83%
Super Street Fighter IV: Arcade Edition	207	88%
Stuntman: Ignition	157	82%
Super Stardust HD	155	74%
Superstars V8: Next Challenge	190	55%
Superstars V8 Racing	181	63%
Super Street Fighter II Turbo HD Remix	176	72%
Super Street Fighter IV	191	90%
Supremacy MMA	211	40%
Switchball	191	75%
Swords And Soldiers	199	88%
Syndicate	216	78%
Tales Of Graces f	222	77%
Tales Of Monkey Island	196	91%
Tales Of Xillia	234	70%
Tales Of Xillia 2	249	71%
Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection Online	161	87%
Tekken 6	184	94%
Tekken Tag Tournament 2	223	90%
Test Drive Ferrari Racing Legends	221	60%
Tetris	202	84%
Test Drive Unlimited 2	203	62%
The Amazing Spider-Man	221	61%
The Last Of Us	233	94%
 When <i>The Last Of Us</i> is good (winter), it's better than anything else this gen – we do not say that lightly.		
The Last Of Us: Left Behind	242	81%
The Testament Of Sherlock Holmes	224	55%
The Walking Dead	231	92%
The Walking Dead: Survival Instinct	231	20%
Thor: God Of Thunder	206	38%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 14	231	61%
Time Crisis 4	166	69%
Time Crisis: Razing Storm	199	58%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
TimeShift	162	72%
TMNT: Turtles In Time-Re-shelled	186	57%
TNA Impact!	171	71%
Tokyo Jungle	223	81%
Tom Clancy's EndWar	173	80%
Tom Clancy's HAWX	177	75%
Tom Clancy's HAWX 2	196	69%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Blacklist	235	71%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Trilogy HD	210	78%
Tomb Raider	229	90%
Tomb Raider Trilogy	204	86%
Tomb Raider: Underworld	173	83%
Tony Hawk's Project 8	151	85%
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD	223	73%
Tony Hawk's Proving Ground	160	72%
Tony Hawk: Ride	188	52%
Top Darts	202	71%
Top Gun	198	53%
Top Gun: Hard Lock	218	45%
Top Spin 3	168	71%
Top Spin 4	203	60%
Topotai: Spinning Through Worlds	183	61%
Toy Story 3	195	82%
Transformers: Dark Of The Moon	208	64%
Transformers: Fall Of Cybertron	223	73%
Transformers: War For Cybertron	194	80%
Trash Panic	181	79%
Trials Of Topaq	159	50%
Trine	184	85%
Trinity: Souls Of Zill O'll	202	56%
Trinity Universe	194	61%
Tron Evolution	200	17%
Tumble	198	70%
Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty	165	40%
Turok	163	46%
Twisted Metal	216	68%
Two Worlds II	203	64%
UFC Undisputed 2009	180	90%
UFC Undisputed 2010	193	88%
UFC Undisputed 3	215	82%
Ultimate Marvel Vs Capcom 3	212	78%
Ultra Street Fighter IV	246	85%
Uncharted: Drake's Fortune	161	87%
Uncharted 2: Among Thieves	185	96%
Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception	212	90%
Under Siege	207	71%
Unearthed: Trail Of Ibn Battuta: Ep1	233	05%
The Unfinished Swan	225	78%
Unreal Tournament III	162	88%
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	151	54%
Valkyria Chronicles	173	82%
Vancouver 2010	189	76%
Vanquish	197	93%
Viking: Battle For Asgard	165	74%
Virtua Fighter 5	151	83%
Virtua Fighter 5: Final Showdown	220	90%
Virtua Tennis 3	150	91%
Virtua Tennis 4	205	79%
Wakeboarding HD	195	65%
The Walking Dead: All That Remains	240	89%
The Walking Dead: 400 Days	234	83%
Wanted: Weapons Of Fate	179	63%
Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine	210	51%
Warhawk	157	84%
Warriors: Legends Of Troy	202	14%
Warriors Orochi 3	217	59%
Watchmen: The End Is Nigh	183	55%
Way Of The Samurai 3	190	16%
Wet	184	41%
Wheelman	178	72%
Where The Wild Things Are	188	56%
White Knight Chronicles	190	55%
White Knight Chronicles II	207	49%
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?	214	79%
Wipeout HD	172	84%
Wizorb	222	78%
Wolfenstein	183	72%
Wonderbook: Book Of Spells	226	80%
Worms Collection	224	85%
Worms 2: Armageddon	198	87%
Worms Ultimate Mayhem	217	80%
WRC: FIA World Rally Championship	197	76%
WRC 2: FIA World Rally Championship	211	63%
WRC 3 FIA World Rally Championship	225	75%
WWE All Stars	204	82%
WWE Legends Of WrestleMania	178	80%
WWE 12	212	50%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
WWE 13	225	55%
X-Blades	178	54%
XCOM: Enemy Unknown	224	94%
 Thinking, planning, failing and dying is back in fashion: <i>XCOM</i> is a phenomenal reimagining of a classic title and an instant classic in its own right.		
X-Men Arcade	203	60%
X-Men Destiny	211	35%
X-Men Origins: Wolverine	179	71%
Yaiba: Ninja Gaiden Z	242	35%
Yakuza: Dead Souls	216	60%
Yakuza 3	191	80%
Yakuza 4	203	79%
Zen Pinball 2	224	90%
Zombie Apocalypse: Never Die Alone	213	69%
Zone Of The Enders HD Collection	226	81%
Zuma	182	78%

PS VITA LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
A-Men	217	70%
Army Corps Of Hell	217	64%
Assassin's Creed III: Liberation	225	76%
Atelier Meruru: The Apprentice Of Arland	221	35%
Everybody's Golf	215	86%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift Extend	216	85%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops Declassified	227	18%
Danganronpa: Trigger Happy Havoc	242	85%
Danganronpa 2: Goodbye Despair	249	89%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Destiny Of Spirits	244	76%
Dokuro	230	71%
Earth Defense Force 2017 Portable	230	82%
Escape Plan	216	81%
FIFA Football	216	80%
fiOw	151	90%
Flower	176	85%
Gravity Crash	187	85%
Gravity Rush	219	86%
Hotline Miami	233	85%
Hustle Kings	216	81%
Joe Danger	194	96%
Killzone: Mercenary	236	88%
LittleBigPlanet	223	93%
Little Deviants	215	69%
Lumines Electric Symphony	216	85%
MGS HD Collection	221	70%
ModNation Racers: Road Trip	215	59%
Mortal Kombat	219	83%
MotorStorm RC	217	81%
Muramasa Rebirth	234	80%
New Little King's Story	224	70%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma Plus	217	72%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 Plus	230	60%
Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath HD	214	86%
Orgarhythm	230	55%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
Persona 4 Golden	228	94%
PixelJunk Monsters	163	94%
Puddle	222	82%
Rayman Origins	216	84%
Reality Fighters	215	52%
Resistance: Burning Skies	219	54%
Ridge Racer	216	48%
Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken	212	82%
Silent Hill: Book Of Memories	225	32%
Sorcery Saga: Curse of the Great Curry God	240	70%
Soul Sacrifice	232	85%
Sound Shapes	223	88%
Superfrog HD	234	41%
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Splitz	224	78%
Sumoni: Demon Arts	230	46%
Super Stardust Delta	216	84%
Tearaway	239	80%
Terraria	232	85%
Touch My Katamari	216	83%
Toukiden: The Age Of Demons	241	86%
Ultimate Marvel vs Capcom 3	216	80%
Uncharted: Fight For Fortune	227	83%
Uncharted: Golden Abyss	215	83%
Unit 13	216	67%
Velocity Ultra	233	80%
Virtua Tennis 4: World Tour Edition	215	81%
Virtue's Last Reward	227	84%
Wipeout 2048	215	87%

*denotes import review

PLAYING THE PLAYLIST

Watch out! Games!



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

Destiny

WHY (was it chosen?)
WE'VE WOKEN THE HIVE

LUKE ALBIGÉS

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

No, not *Destiny*, you trolls – my addiction. It's started to spill out of the game and into real life and everyone around me is no doubt sick to death of me regurgitating the game's incredibad dialogue and finding it hilarious. I'm almost level 31 now thanks to new DLC gear and while I'm under no illusion that *The Dark Below* is good value for money, the content it adds is nonetheless brilliant as ever. I know I promised I'd play something else soon – I just haven't. Why? I don't even have time to explain why I don't have time to explain...



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

Far Cry 4

WHY (was it chosen?)
It's all about the outposts...

PAUL
WALKER-EMIG

MY FAVOURITE THING

about *Far Cry 3* was taking down outposts. My approach was a stealthy one in which I scoped out the area before taking down enemies using a silenced pistol, a sniper rifle and stealth takedowns. Though it takes place in a different setting, not much has changed with *Far Cry 4*. Taking out enemy outposts is still the best thing about the game and I still favour the stealthy approach. Granted, I have been tempted to come wailing into an outpost atop an elephant a couple of times, but who can blame me?



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PLAY
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THE HERO PS4 DESERVES

BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT

How Rocksteady's trilogy closer is set to be
the best superhero game yet

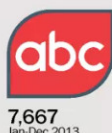
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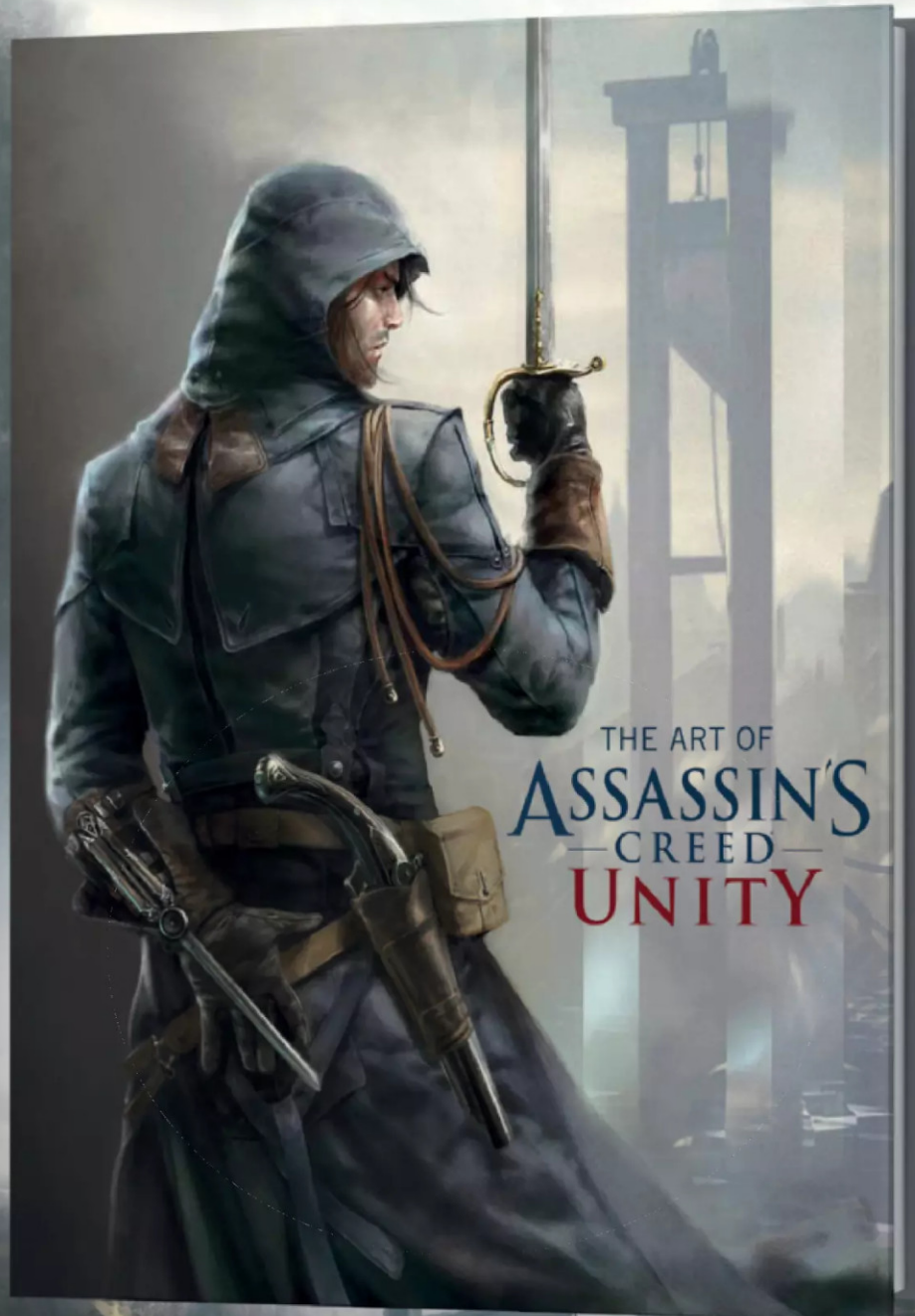
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